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No. 188.

A BEAUTIFUL PRESENCE.

BY FRANK M. LEBER.

There's a beautiful presence in our home
Which follows me all day long,
Its radiance beams where'er I roam,
And burdens my heart of song.
Oh, can you not guess what this nectar is
That rimes my chalice o'er,
And makes my hallowed day-dreams dwell
On the blissful Evermore?

As I pace my vine-bordered lattice
Where sun-darts filter through,
This beautiful, soulful joyousness
Outrivals the sunbeam here.
Oh, can you not think what this brightness is
That comes at twilight's hour,
And fills my dreaming fancies
With strange, sweet, mystic power?

Methinks as I list to the caroling notes
That evening songsters tell,
That this earth-born spirit from the wildwood came
Our homelands bower to fill.
Ah, now you know what this being is
That makes my heart love wild,
List, the whispered, joy-breathed tone:
'Tis Lura, our poet-child.

Ytol:

Lost, Wedded, Widowed and Rewon.

A STORY OF TRIALS AND BALMS.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "STEALING A HEART," "BLACK HAND,"
"IRON AND GOLD," "AND SOBERSON," "PEARL OF
TEARS," "HERCULES, THE MUNCHRAK," "CAT
AND TIGER," "FLAMING CALISMAN," ETC.

CHAPTER III.

A HEART'S SACRIFICE TO DUTY.

"But whence the deadly hate
That caused all this?"

—ROGER.

"The silent, soft and humble heart
In the violet's hidden sweetness breathes;
And the tender soul that can not part
A twine of evergreen fondly wreathes."
—FERNIVAL.

"I know not if the sunshine waste
The world is dark since thou art gone!"
—WILLIS.

The Dufours were near neighbors to our characters of the Lyn farm.

A broad estate it was, with acres richly cultivated through the seasons, and yielding bountiful harvests. Its handsome dwelling had been improved many times within a few years; and whatever Gerald Dufour lacked in other qualifications, he certainly had the reputation of being a steady, business-like, successful farmer.

He was a man of peculiar likes and dislikes; morose-tempered, and exceedingly unpopular in Bud Villa. But whether this latter fact annoyed him was not apparent; he was always cold, haughty, irritable, decidedly bear-like in his domestic life, and, by his actions, causing braver gossips to say that there must be some great secret locked in Gerald Dufour's breast, which made him seem to dread a too close contact with the busy world.

Wharfe, after separating from his sad little sweetheart, on that bright Sunday noon, reached home just as the farmer and his wife were sitting down to dinner.

He perceived a worried look in his mother's face; and on his father's brow there was a lowering frown, boding a tempest.

"Well, sir," said Gerald Dufour, carving spitefully at the fowl, "where have you been?"

Wharfe was surprised. Such a question had not been asked him for over a year.

"Over to the Lyn farm, father."

"Ahem!—have, eh? To see that girl Ytol?"

A pause ensued, the silence broken by the cracking of the bones and joints, as the knife went savage and jerking through the meat.

Mrs. Dufour sat very still.

"Well, sir, I saw you."

"Saw me, father?"

"Yes, sir, I want you to understand that I saw you—saw it all."

"What, father?"

"Your outlandish tom-fooleries with the waif of the Lyn farm."

"There's nothing foolish between Ytol and I."

"I say there is!" interrupted Dufour, striking the table with the handle of his knife, neglecting the carving, and gazing sternly at his son.

The contention had begun. Mrs. Dufour gave her husband an appealing glance; but it was lost.

"I say there is foolishness between you and this girl Ytol—too much of it. And I want it stopped. Do you hear?—stopped at once!"

"Father!" began Mrs. Dufour.

"Silence!" And to Wharfe: "She has already captivated you by her pretty face and artful coyness. If it goes any further, there'll be trouble. Remember that—trouble."

Wharfe's handsome face colored; but his voice was firm as he asked:

"What has Ytol done, father, that you object to my acquaintance with her?"

"No matter," bluntly, and he resumed his manipulation of knife and fork.

"Has Ytol ever wronged you?"

A momentary glance from the hard, dark eyes; but no return.

"Is not Ytol a good girl, father?"

"She is, indeed," put in Mrs. Dufour, who felt it her duty to do the friendless child that justice.

"Dora!" he exclaimed.

"I can't help it, Gerald; everybody knows that Ytol is gentle and good, though no one will bestow a smile upon her."

"Because she's a waif, the offspring of some disreputable pair?"

"Take care!" she warned, in a strange tone, as he uttered the last.

"She's a waif, and that's enough."

"Not enough for me," defended the wife.

"The child is not to blame for—"

"Dora!—you forget yourself," sharply, and with rising anger.

There was far more of meaning in this reminder than a listener could detect. She made



"Not yet, my hearties! Come on, blast your teeth I—take Hoyle Yarik, if you can!"

no further remark, but gazed steadily into his face, which was purpling with a half-curbed passion.

"They are already too intimate. I saw him kiss her."

"Nay, dear father and mother, don't quarrel—and about Ytol," begged Wharfe.

"The first thing we know they'll be genuine lovers. Then what? Do you suppose I would permit it? Sooner see him dead! I have other views for our son."

"You should have spoken sooner, father," said Wharfe.

"What do you mean by that?"

"We are lovers already."

"What?"

"It is too late now for us to be dragged asunder."

"What—what have you been saying to her?" he gasped, choking with pent rage.

"The same that you said to my mother once," answered Wharfe, calmly, and his honest brown eyes never flinched.

"Do you mean to tell me that you are pledged to each other?—you two children?"

"Don't be angry, father. I know that everybody is unkind to Ytol, because she is poor and shrouded in mystery, because she can not name her parents. She is abused by words and acts, despised and buffeted. But she is good and pure, and her father and mother must have been like her."

"They were not. Bad philosophy!" Dufour said, coldly.

"The fairest flowers come from the filthiest dirt perhaps!"

"Her God is our God!" continued the boy, eloquently, "and in His eyes she is spotless, and worthy of anybody's love. If she is unfortunate, it is not her fault. Not a girl in the whole village more deserving than she for her truth, her humble spirit, and her modesty. She loves me dearly. And I have vowed—yes, vowed that she shall be my wife."

"Never!—if I have to kill you first," cried the father, half-blind, and swaying unsteadily in his consuming wrath. "How dare you—you—speak!"

"Oh, Heaven!" moaned Mrs. Dufour, hiding her face in her hands.

"Father!" Wharfe arose, and stood holding by the back of his chair, while his face glowed, "do not talk of killing me; you are not yourself now, and know not what you say. I am sorry that I should have gone contrary to your wishes; but, I repeat, it is too late to retract. I could not—if I would—desert Ytol, without breaking her confiding heart. Heaven knows, her existence is miserable enough as it is—and that same Heaven shall judge me when I say I will be true to Ytol though I have to rebel against you."

The boy was warmed to a vigorous spirit, giving vent to his feelings in a way that held Gerald Dufour, for the time, listening. His eyes flashed out the enthusiasm of his soul; he raised a hand aloft and pointed upward, as if invoking the ear of Him who best knew the right and wrong of this impressive scene.

For several seconds the irate farmer seemed bereft of speech. Then:

"Curse this Ytol! Curse her winning ways! Accursed be every hour of her existence! You shall not marry her! I would rather stab you to the heart first! You shall not!—you shall not!—no!—never!"

He wheeled from the table, and, grasping up his hat, strode from the house.

He walked along the gravelled way at a quick, uneven pace, and, pursuing an indefinite course, presently entered one of the broad fields just greenening with young wheat.

He was lost to every thing but his passion, which consumed him, maddened him; and all singular and unexplained this dire, more than hatred, which he evinced toward pretty, harmless Ytol.

Then a revolution seemed to form within him. A short distance off, on the right, he could see farmer Lyn's house; and he turned abruptly in its direction, muttering:

"She must be gotten out of the way. This must be prevented. Curse the fate which has attached to her line!—one that, deprived me of a brother. My son marry her?—never!"

As he neared the dwelling, he paused on hearing a loud cry coming from within.

Rebecca Lyn's voice was crying out harshly, and Ytol was screaming for mercy, as the relentless spiteful plied the stinging strap.

"Mother Lyn! Mother Lyn! Don't!—oh, don't beat me any more!" rang in the ears of the listener outside, as he halted behind the angle of the stable.

Perhaps Gerald Dufour might have softened toward the unhappy creature while thus witnessing her actual sufferings. But the dark cloud settled again in his face.

"No, no; no pity here. No pity for the child of those for whom I once swore eternal hate! And sooner than see her the wife of Wharfe, I'd kill both her and him."

Then Mother Lyn:

"Now, you wizen! I said I'd thrash you when I came back, and I've kept my word. Away with you, and bring the chickens for dinner. Stir yourself, or I'll give you some more!"

Ytol came out, weeping bitterly. Her whipping had been severe; yet she felt far more the undying animosity of her tormentor than she did the merciless blows.

Not a day passed without the usual punishment, till her tender flesh was striped and blue with the marks of violence.

Ytol, called a low voice near her.

She looked quickly up.

"Why, Mr. Dufour—are you here?"

"Come to me, Ytol; I want to speak to you."

His tone was kind and persuasive. It was assumed to further his plans—for he had conceived a plot by which to sunder the mutual attachment existing between the two children.

"I'm glad to see you, Mr. Dufour—excuse me, but, indeed, I haven't a minute to spare. I must hurry back, or mother Lyn will beat me. Won't you step up and see them at the house?"

"I want to see you—not them. You poor child! I heard her whipping you, just now. I feel for you."

It had been long since Gerald Dufour used the kindly tone with which he now addressed Ytol.

His sympathy brought back the tears which she had wiped away on seeing him, and her lips quivered with a suppressed sob.

"Come here, Ytol. I'll be answerable for your delay. I have something important to speak to you."

Feeling assured of his protection, she obeyed.

"My child," he said, "you have done very wrong; do you know it?"

"I don't know in what you mean, Mr. Dufour; but everybody says that of me, whatever I do, so it must be so."

"Well, I'll tell you what I mean: you have won the love of my son, Wharfe."

She started and paled.

"And is that a sin, Mr. Dufour? Oh! it has been my only happiness. No one loves me—everybody hates me. Wharfe has not treated me like the rest—and I have blessed him for it. What is there wrong in that?"

"Wait, wait. You do not consider how serious it may turn out. Now, Ytol, I admit you are an unfortunate girl. But that can not alter the case. Let me be plain. You and Wharfe can never be married with my consent. You love him—"

"Oh! I do love him, Mr. Dufour. Don't say that we must be parted!"

"Be sensible, Ytol. If you love him, then you must make a sacrifice in his interest."

"How?" pulling nervously at the corner of her apron.

"If he persists in holding to his vows, I shall disown him," very calmly, but very distinctly.

"Oh, Mr. Dufour!" she cried, clasping her hands, and turning those great blue eyes imploringly on his face, "you wouldn't do that?"

"Yes, I'll cast him out without a penny. Think of it: he is young and ambitious; he has the world before him, filled with brilliant prospects. If he marries you, he will be poor, and must struggle constantly; and, no doubt, he would soon regret his headstrong act. His love for you would molder away under the tax and torture of poverty, and you would both be wretched. Would you wish to blight Wharfe's life like this?"

Ytol did not reply for several moments.

"I certainly wouldn't marry him if you did not consent, Mr. Dufour. I wouldn't want him to disobey you."

His eyes gleamed.

"And you never will have my consent."

"But what am I to do?" Ytol faltered.

"Will you do as I advise? Listen: why not run away from this place, where you get nothing but scolding and kicks?"

"Run away!"

"Yes. You could find pleasure among strangers."

"Oh! I couldn't leave father Lyn," said the child; "he does all he can for me. I never thought of such a thing as running away."

"But it's high time you did, my dear. I make you an offer: I'll give you a thousand dollars, if you'll leave these parts forever."

"A thousand dollars!" Ytol instantly thought of what might possibly be accomplished with such a sum; and, notwithstanding she did not wish to give up father Lyn, she began to consider the temptation.

Still, her eyes drooped with this fresh pang that was in her heart, and the fair head sunk slowly forward.

"It is the only way in which you can break off the unlucky engagement with Wharfe. You can not marry him, and you will both feel bad every time you meet, knowing this. Nobody will mourn your absence particularly; and with a thousand dollars in your pocket, who knows but what, some day, you may be a grand lady?"

And Ytol, to herself:

"There would be an end to these cruel whippings. I might educate myself with the money. Perhaps, after all, Wharfe will not miss me so much. He would soon find somebody else to love better than me. Besides, I would not marry him without his father's consent, and ruin all his prospects. All's for the best."

"Well, Ytol, what do you say?"

"Mr. Dufour—it cost a superhuman effort, I think I'll do as you advise."

Gerald Dufour lost no time, now, in clinching the matter.

"To-night, at twelve o'clock," he said, almost hissing, "meet me at the mile-stone. I'll be there to give you the money. You can take the Bud Villa stage at 3 A. M.; and after that, go where you please."

"I'll be there," promised Ytol, lowly.

"Do not fail."

Just then came the harsh voice of Rebecca Lyn.

"Ytol, you wizen! where's them chickens?"

"Coming, mother Lyn—coming," answered Dufour, advancing briskly; and to Ytol: "Make haste, my dear; I'll see you through."

At sight of the visitor, mother Lyn's exterior changed wonderfully. She greeted him with utmost cordiality.

"Why, good-day, neighbor Dufour. How do you do? Come right straight in and make yourself at home. We're very glad to see you. Herbert! Herbert! Herb-e-r! here's dear Mr. Dufour come to see us. Herbert, I say!"

Dufour lingered long enough to explain that Ytol had delayed to converse with him, at his request, and was not to blame. He also exacted a promise from mother Lyn that the strap should not be used again during the afternoon.

He was elated with the success of his proposition to the young girl. When he took his departure—declining their pressing invitation to dine—his habitually stern countenance wore a satisfied, even jubilant expression, and he chuckled lowly.

That night Ytol did not undress, but threw herself on the narrow couch, and lay silent in the cheerless room, with face buried in the coarse pillow.

After a while she began to sob in a hushed, painful way, and her lips murmured, brokenly:

"Oh, Wharfe!—dear Wharfe! And so I must give you up, after all? God bless you for every kind word with which you tried to cheer me! God bless you always, and teach you, in his strength, for your own good, to forget poor Ytol. Oh, heaven!—the sweet heaven Wharfe taught me to believe is far beyond the skies, and peopled with angels that sympathize with, and watch over the oppressed—aid me, now! Let me not plead in vain for that comfort and guidance which, he said, always came in answer to prayer."

She slid from the bed and knelt down, raising her eyes upward in the darkness, and praying fervently.

The tears gushed anew over her cheeks, for Wharfe had taught her that very appeal to God—a sublime, yet simple beseeching, whispered by a weary, laden soul. Slowly the hours passed; the night deepened, and she remained there, with face hid in the coverlet to drown the sobbing; and the whole picture of the past—with its trials—was flitting through her mind: a panorama, bleak and sad, interspersed by the few recollections of endearment that centered round Wharfe Dufour.

Shortly after eleven o'clock, a tip-toeing figure glided forth into the starry night.

It was Ytol.

She paused a moment to look back on her home of sadness.

Carlo, the watch-dog, came bounding to her side with a low whine of pleasure.

"Good-by, Carlo—dear old fellow! good-by. You always loved me, poor thing. I'm sorry to leave you, but I must. Poor dumb Carlo! how we have played together. You won't have anybody to romp with when I am gone. You'll soon forget me, though; Ytol won't be remembered long. Good-by."

She bent, as she talked in this strain, to caress the faithful animal that fawned affectionately against her. Then she started down the spectral lane, to keep her engagement at the mile-stone.

Carlo followed close at her side. She strove repeatedly to drive him back, but he would not leave her. He seemed to feel that she needed a protector; and finally, fearful of being late at the appointed spot, she allowed him his own way.

Ytol never dreamed then that he was to be her valued companion in the checkered career about to open on her young life.

When morning broke Ytol and Carlo were missed.

Greatest excitement prevailed on the Lyn farm. The "hands" were dispatched to scour in every direction, and a messenger was sent to Bud Villa, to make inquiries.

Rebecca Lyn immediately concluded that the child had run off, and she waited, grinding her

false teeth and fingering the strap, vowing direct punishment when the "vixen" should be brought before her.

But Ytol was not to be found, of course. Herbert Lyn tried not to believe that she had surely fled, and forced himself to appear calm, while his heart was mourning.

The messenger returned in due time from Bud Villa, with the intelligence that Ytol had left in the three-o'clock stage accompanied by a dog known as belonging to the Lyn farm.

The farmer was utterly broken down in spirit by the news. He sat like a statue before the hearth-stone, with a single burning tear trickling down his hot cheek.

"Poor Ytol! Poor little Ytol!" he murmured; "I loved her as if she was my own child. It was your fault, mother Lyn—all yours; you drove her out into the cold world. May God forgive you for it! I feel that we shall never see her again—never. Poor—friendless—Ytol!"

Rebecca Lyn said nothing. She hung up the strap on its pin, and went moodily about her household affairs. It may be, just the slightest pricking of remorse entered her hardened bosom at the moment, caused by reflections on the past treatment of the child, and thoughts of the dangers to which she would be exposed while struggling alone amid the cold charity of the earth's people.

Far off, on the banks of the shining bay, a figure was wandering about in loneliness, with sorrow-hung head.

Wharfe Dufour. The boy realized his loss all too keenly. When he knew that Ytol had gone—perhaps forever—a damp despair shadowed over his heart; the sunny hopes and ambitions which he had cherished, to share with his loved companion, all sunk in ashes; and he roamed desolately night the dear, familiar tryst, talking and moaning to himself, and calling Ytol's name, as if he expected to see her spring from some near covert to meet him as she had been wont.

"Oh, Ytol!—Ytol!" he groaned, in an anguished spirit; "you never loved me truly, or you would not have done this. I could bear it if it was only for a while, but to lose you forever—to see you no more! I can not live without you! Come back to me, Ytol!—come back!"

The ripple of the waters thrown by the soft breeze in tiny waves upon the shore; the gay, melodious warbles of birds that had no interest in his woe; the swaying of budding branches, and mysterious sighs—these alone answered him.

All around seemed very, very drear. There were no longer any charms in the bursting beauties of spring-time; every thing seemed dark and mistful, since the sweetest, rarest flower of the scene was missing.

Ytol was miles away, speeding over the railroad, with Carlo napping at her feet—speeding further and further from the heart that pined for her, and wondering, silently, what her future was to be.

How many of us, like to her, have wondered thus, building golden castles or glorious ideals—see them vanish in the gull-girt realms of Time?

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE TRAIL.

"This, this is the race for gain and grace,
Richer than vases and crowns."

—TURREN.

"How little we may count upon the future,
Or reckon what that future may bring forth!"

—NORTON.

HOYLE YARIK shrunk back before the glistering blade in Dwila's hand.

Her determined, threatening tone was not to be mistaken; he saw that the girl would fight to the death—stab him, perhaps, if he advanced another step, and he returned the flashing gaze of her lustrous eyes, pausing before her in momentary indecision.

"Well, what in thunder does all this mean?" he demanded in a high key.

"It means that you are a fool to be frightened so easily. You are not in danger. Wait till Catdjo secures that man, and we'll proceed to business. Are you hurt, Catdjo?"

The dwarf made a sign in the negative; but even as he did so he wiped away the blood that was trickling from a wound in his forehead, and marring his vision.

Paul Faerot still lay as if dead. The dwarf soon had him tightly bound, hand and foot.

"Take him from the room," ordered Dwila. Catdjo raised the limp, heavy form in his muscular arms, and carried it into one of the opposite apartments, during which space Dwila explained to the convict.

Yarik was soon assured, and he restored the pistol to his pocket.

"Blast my teeth!" he exclaimed. "I thought you'd laid a trap for me. Since it's all right, why—yes, we'll proceed to business. Drive ahead, young'un."

He swaggered roilingly across the room, and seated himself upon the lounge, eying her stoically.

Catdjo returned, bathing his forehead with a rag. The bullet of Faerot's pistol had gouged an ugly furrow just above the temple, but the hurt was not serious.

"Now, Hoyle Yarik, do you accept my proposition?"

"Just state it over again, young'un. How was it?" pulling his hat down over his eyes, and smoothing his beard with an air of importance.

"I want to know what became of Nora Dufour, after she left the grave of her husband, Silas, with her babe in her arms? or, what became of that babe after it was separated from its mother, if it was separated? Or, if Nora Dufour is alive, where is she to be found?"

"Ah—um!" vented Yarik, removing his hat and running his fingers through his matted hair, with his elbow propped on his knee.

"Well, Nora Dufour's dead—I reckon"—nodding significantly.

"Then the child?"

"Where's the cash, young'un?" extending one hand, and snapping his fingers meaningly.

Dwila received a large pocket-book from the dwarf. Extracting the sum she had offered, she said, inquiringly:

"You will tell me?"

"Yes."

"Mind, no trickery—"

"Just hand over them notes, young'un, and you'll get what you want."

When he had carefully stowed away the money which Dwila gave him, he walked to the window, relieved his mouth of its cud, swaggled back to his seat, and said:

"Now, I'll take mighty few words to tell the whole thing."

"Yes, yes."

At that moment, unperceived by the girl, the dwarf or the convict, the same shadow that had previously caused the scene of commotion, fell across the shattered panes, and rested on the curtain.

Paul Faerot had burst his bonds, and was at his former stand playing eavesdropper.

"Go on, Hoyle Yarik—this child?"

"Well, you must know. Nora Dufour died pretty soon after her husband. You know how he died?"

"Well—yes," mysteriously, and glancing covertly at her.

"Never mind that, Hoyle Yarik; but, go on."

"Before Nora Dufour died, she took her baby to a farm-house, and left it on the porch. She hadn't a red penny in the world, and was sick at the time, so she thought she'd turn the helpless thing over to somebody at night raise it to some good."

"Where is this place? Where did she leave the babe?" interrupted Dwila.

"It was at the Lyn farm, about one mile outside of Bud Villa, on the up-country road."

"And how long ago was it?"

"Some fifteen years, near as I can remember."

"Has the child a name?"

"Yes, I think Herbert Lyn called it 'Ytol.' But, maybe it's changed since. I've been in jail half onto six years."

"Then the child of Silas and Nora Dufour is a place near here, known as the Lyn farm? And she—it is a girl?"

"Yes."

"She is called Ytol?"

"That's it. Toto!"

"Do you hear, Catdjo?"

There came a low, chuckling, guttural sound—hardly a laugh—from the Dwarf's thick lips, and he nodded rapidly several times.

"If that's all you wanted, young'un, I guess I'll go now."

"I am done with you."

Yarik withdrew, wondering upon two things: first, how she knew that he possessed the information she desired; second, why this strange girl and Silas-of-a-Dwarf were so anxious to ascertain the whereabouts of the child of Nora Dufour.

"Maybe the gal's come into a legacy," he surmised, "and these folks are huntin' her up to tell her."

But Hoyle Yarik conjectured widely from the truth.

Another spur brought the mysterious couple in pursuit of Ytol, another object incited them on—one which, could Ytol have been apprised of it, would have chilled her blood and caused her to flee to the uttermost ends of the earth.

In the hallway, Yarik encountered Paxo Faerot, the man he had shot down awhile before. The meeting startled him; instantly his hand sought his pistol, and he halted warily.

Faerot noticed the movement.

"Don't be alarmed," he said; "you need not fear me, Hoyle Yarik."

"Who the devil are you? blast your teeth! You've been dogging me ever since I got into jail and out of it."

"You know that I sought exactly the same information which you have just given to the parties in room 3. I'm after Ytol, the daughter of Nora Dufour. I know where she is now, for I was listening at the window."

"You was, eh? Then you needn't bother me any more. Let me get past here."

"I want you for something else, Hoyle Yarik. Wait."

"Want me, do you?" grasping the pistol butt, and fitting thumb and finger to the hammer and trigger.

"I tell you you need not fear me. I, also, have a proposition to make."

"You have?"

"Yes. Step into this room with me and hear it."

Yarik did as requested. But, he was only half-satisfied of his safety, for he kept a close watch on the movements of the man, with weapon ready.

As they disappeared beyond the doorway, Catdjo crossed the hall to the apartment where he had left Faerot bound and insensible. A low cry of surprise told that he had discovered the prisoner's absence; then all was still.

At the expiration of half an hour Faerot and Yarik emerged from the room and proceeded down-stairs. The two appeared to be on excellent terms.

"Remember now, Yarik, it is a sacred bargain," said Faerot, holding him by the arm, and pausing in the narrow passage.

"Count on me till I kick the bucket. I'm yours—blast my teeth if I ain't!"

Hoyle Yarik went into the rear room, and Faerot was soon hurrying along the main street of Bud Villa.

The tavern-keeper was sitting in a contracted position, in one of the cane chairs, white as death, and shivering as if with an ague.

He had heard the pistol-shots in the upper story, and his mind was overwhelmed at once with pictures of bloody tableaux and murdered humans.

With limbs quaking beneath him, he hastened to close the doors and windows; and now he sat in the darkened surroundings, his face ghastly and teeth rattling together.

"Hello, Je-re-my!" exclaimed the convict, pausing in astonishment, what's the row?"

"Dude-de-de—Coddle had not the power to speak."

"What's up, Je-re-my?" Blast my teeth! it's dark enough to bring the owls out."

"Who—who—who's killed?" stammered Coddle.

"Killed?"

"Who—who's shot?"

"Hal! hal! hal! why, there isn't anybody hurt; only accidental explosion, Je-re-my."

"Are you sure?" he asked, stuttering.

"Course I am. Only a kinder little surprise scene; no danger done. Come, let's make some light in here." As he spoke, he raised one foot breast high, sent it crashing through the window, and burst the shutter from its bolt.

"Now, bring me a razor, Je-re-my—and mug and brush."

"A razor?" echoed Coddle.

"A razor?" shouted Yarik.

Coddle jumped at the fierce tone.

"Now, my dear Hoyle, what can you want with a razor?"

"To cut somebody's throat—"

"Oh, Lord!"

"Hurry, Je-re-my, I want to get rid of this hair on my face, that's all."

Coddle procured the articles, casting fearful glances at the savage convict as he walked unsteadily from the room.

When he returned, Yarik proceeded to shave before the broken mirror that hung on the wall.

"Je-re-my, I want a new suit of clothes."

"You shall have them, my dear Hoyle; you shall have my very best—you shall have any thing."

"My dear Hoyle," mimicked Yarik, lathering his beard, then sharply: "Fetch 'em out in a hurry. I'm going to begin a new life to-day, Je-re-my. I haven't got much time to spare—why don't you move?"

"Yes, yes, I'll bring them."

Coddle made all possible haste to supply him. He felt encouraged by the thought that he would soon be rid of this half-frenzied, law-hunted and much feared individual—rid of him in a manner which we will show presently.

He brought his new clothes and laid them on the table.

"Now, Je-re-my, we'll fix up our old accounts. You've got some money of mine."

"My dear Hoyle—"

"My dear Hoyle!" in whining imitation of the tavern-keeper's wavering tone; and then:

"Come, Je-re-my, shell out. When I was captured and sent to jail for that little affair on the 'Gipsy Queen,' I left a thousand dollars with you. Produce it, Je-re-my—produce it, old boy."

Coddle seemed dismayed.

"But, Hoyle, you don't really want it—"

"Yes, I do, Je-re-my; so hand it over."

"But, it isn't in the house. I haven't it here," protested the tavern-keeper, trembling till he nearly sunk down.

"You lie, Je-re-my!"

Yarik had done shaving, and was leisurely putting on his outfit. He spoke in a peculiarly quiet voice, but Coddle shuddered as the clear eyes glanced on him.

"My dear Hoyle—"

"Don't you 'dear' me any more, blast your teeth! Give me what belongs to me. Quick, now, or I'll draw the edge of that razor around your neck!"

Coddle groaned aloud.

"I haven't it in ready money, Hoyle; it's loaned out at interest—indeed it is. All my capital's invested. If you'll only wait—"

"I won't wait!" Yarik snarled. "And I say you lie! I'll give you five minutes to produce that thousand."

He paused in his shirt sleeves, and took up the razor from the table, fingering it menacingly.

"Hoyle! Hoyle!"—the affrighted tavern-keeper dropped to his knees and clasped his hands—"I swear it isn't in the house! Don't!—for the Lord's sake, don't!"

"What Yarik might have done was suddenly prevented."

In the center of the room was a trap-door, leading to the ale vault. This trap-door shot up and over with a bang, and three men, with the nimbleness of monkeys, bounded out on the floor.

"Back to prison, Hoyle Yarik, for the murder of Nora Dufour!" cried the foremost.

"Surrender!" shouted another.

Yarik comprehended in an instant.

"Detectives!" he blurted.

Had he known that Jeremy Coddle admitted those detectives and hid them away, to aid them in the capture of the tavern-keeper, he would have died that minute; for Yarik's pistol was out quick as a flash, and he bounded toward the window.

Gaining the sill at a leap, he paused, upright, holding by the frame, and faced his enemies with leveled weapon.

His hair stood out wildly, his whole mien was desperate, ferocious, defiant as he roared, in his bull-like voice:

"Not yet, my hearties! Come on, blast your teeth!—take Hoyle Yarik if you can!"

They paused before the frowning muzzle; the three revolvers raised simultaneously to bear upon him.

"Catch him! Catch him!" screamed Coddle.

"Don't let him escape!"

"So you did this, eh?" bellowed the convict, in a terrible accent. "Take that, then!"

The pistol cracked, and its ball sped on an aim of death.

Coddle uttered a shriek of agony, and reeled, tossing his arms aloft.

Blending with this rung the whip-like snaps and reports of the revolvers.

Hoyle Yarik went backward, through frame and sash, amid a shower of glass.

But when the detectives reached the window the convict had vanished.

The stage that left Bud Villa at three o'clock on the morning subsequent to the events of this chapter contained Dwila St. Jean and the Dwarf, Catdjo.

On the outside of the coach, with the driver, were Paul Faerot and Hoyle Yarik—both disguised beyond possibility of recognition.

The first named couple had been to Lyn farm; but they missed their object, whatever it was; for the reader knows that Ytol had fled on Sunday night.

Now, however, they were on her track. She had considerable start ahead of them, but they felt confident of being able to trace her—the more so when they learned that she was accompanied by a large Newfoundland dog.

"We may soon overtake her, Catdjo," said Dwila to her mute companion, "and then for our revenge! I wish the thing was over. You've been dragging me all over the country, till I'm tired."

The Dwarf's eyes were flashing, and his beast-like face was contorted twice-savagely. But the gloom of the coach covered this sign of inward passion.

Reaching the station, they made inquiries, and soon ascertained that a young girl answering to their description, and having with her a large dog, had taken a Philadelphia train on the morning previous.

"Oh, Catdjo!—tickets for Philadelphia!"

While these two were foot-hold in the wake of Ytol, for a purpose to be developed in due time, Faerot and Yarik were their close companions, following the same scent, though with a far different object in view.

Would they find her?

And Ytol?—where was she while the four, in couples, were so mysteriously pursuing her? And what tangled web was their presence weaving for her future?

We shall see.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 187.)

The Creole Wife:

OR, THE COUSIN'S SCHEME.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

AUTHOR OF "CORAL AND REEF," "ADRIA, THE ADOPTED," "STRANGELY WED," "CECIL'S DECEIT," "MADAME DURAND'S PROTEGES," "THE FAIR WIDOW," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

A SHADOW.

THERE was another listener—one who had not come accidentally upon that angry word-drawn battle. In her own room, lighted by the rosy sunset gleams, Mrs. Leland had thrown off her outdoor summer wrappings, then passed through the dimming corridor, down the stairway which she had descended by mistake on the first evening of her arrival at the Homestead.

She did not go to the library however, but by another turn passed into the dim, shadowy den, the almost unused study at the rear. Crouching down with her ear pressed close to the door communicating between the two, she listened breathlessly to the continued altercation.

"Since you ask it, I fear that you are rather deeply involved, my dear cousin. I came out for the purpose of throwing myself upon your generosity, of asking a little time to retrieve the evil fortune which has come upon me, and through me—yourself. I have no plea to excuse the liberty I was guilty of in using that idle capital of yours—no excuse, but the simple state of the case was this: The enterprise promised such certain success, and you had always been willing to trust every thing to my judgment. I had your standing authority for transacting all business in your name, and when I found it indispensable to command a larger amount than any I had in hand, there

seemed no reason why I should not use that reserved sum, except that scruple of yours which in a business light rather lost its sentimental coloring. I was very confident, and if I had met success instead of failure you would never have known, and I should have turned an honest penny from the operation. I did fall however. There's no use mincing the small bones while there's a whole skeleton to be disposed of! I really fear you are so deeply involved that the Homestead may have to be sacrificed to preserve your own credit and the honor of the family name—the last a very important consideration, of course."

The white heat of Elmer Casselworth's wrath was aggravated by the other's coolly insolent assurance. He had not realized that he might be hopelessly disabled by his cousin's losses. In fact, he had no definite knowledge of his own resources, except perhaps a vague supposition that they were exhaustless. He failed to comprehend it even now, or refused to credit the other's defiant assertion.

"No use mincing matters now," Darcy had thought. "As well know what I may expect from him at the outset as to wait for the slower discovery of the rest which is to come. There's no hope now of keeping any thing back—no hope of any thing more than the possibility that he may accept the situation without visiting any worse consequences on my head than have already fallen there."

"If you had even asked that much of me," Elmer said, "the sacrifice of the Homestead, I would have granted it sooner than have touched one cent of the money which has seemed like blood-money—the price of her life. Sincerest of the sentimentality of that if you will; no weak sentimentality can cover the reality of your course, and no misapprehension of mine shall shield you from whatever consequences you have deserved. No other dollar of mine shall go to swell such losses as I may have already sustained through you."

The one hope to which Darcy Casselworth had clung, that his cousin might be led to acknowledge his own forged signature, was dwindling hopelessly small.

"I was a fool to have come here at all," he thought. "Why did I not make the best of the time I had instead of trusting to the weakness of that obstinate idiot? Let him alone and the chances are he could not swear that the signature was either true or false. There's no reason in him, in that mood at least."

The instant of silence in which that thought was embraced was broken by an unexpected voice as the listener at the doorway came forward to disclose himself.

"Will you ring for lights, Mr. Casselworth? I think I may have something of importance to reveal at this juncture."

Darcy Casselworth turned with a start and a curse.

"Grandison! It only required this—for you to turn against me!" His short, heavy breathing was audible throughout the room. He realized in that moment as he had never expected to realize, how hard the path of the transgressor may become; but his sleuth-hound persistence of bold courage did not desert him even now; there was no penitence in his heart—not even the penitence born of the fear of consequences. "Yes, by all means, let us have lights and hear the heavy accusation to the end. It is an accusation, I presume, since you have it in your power to make the last one."

"It is an accusation, though perhaps not of the kind you may be expecting." As Grandison spoke, the master of the mansion turned to the mantel, and finding matches, lit an astral lamp standing there. "An accusation that does not relate to this disastrous failure of yours which I have labored faithfully for eight years to make so complete, that, for the sake of buying undeserved mercy at the last you might be forced to confess the truth. Eight years ago you triumphed in an infamous scheme to the ruin of a noble, generous, true-hearted woman. You had pursued her with your malicious hatred, your unprovoked enmity for years before. You poisoned her husband's mind against the purest of her sex. You wrought upon her generosity to bring the appearance of evil against her, and you met with the best success that wickedness ever earned. The weak husband believed every word of the infamous lies you told him. No, don't interrupt—don't attempt to add another to the overwhelming list for which you will have to answer. I have worked for eight years to vindicate the noble woman whom you so fully defamed. I think I have the power to extort the truth from you at last."

"The truth!" It was Elmer Casselworth repeating the words in a startled, breathless way.

"Who is this woman whom he defamed—who?"

The schemer whose evil works were rising up, one by one, to witness against him, stood still. He had folded his arms across his breast, his head was bent forward a little as he listened with that slight sneering smile upon his face, the hard glint in the eyes that did not waver under the scathing gaze of his accuser; no change in his face except in the slight pallor which had marked his appearance during the entire day. With one swift glance at the startled, intensely excited face of the duped husband, the stock-broker's gaze returned to the man who was bearing his inevitable defeat with the silent desperation of defiance still.

He stood—a tall, still figure—looking back at the dim old pile. Very peaceful was the scent of atmosphere of the brooding purple dusk. The stars were coming out in brilliant points, the shrubbery made clumps of dense shadow, and across the wide, open space the outlines of the massive old Homestead building were vaguely defined. He scarcely felt one pang of regret looking back at the generous mansion, where his plots and deceit had wrought such unhappy results—for the last time indeed, through his own active agency, had he not known—scarcely a regret, and what he did experience was the selfishness of knowing his own ambitious aims defeated.

A swift step, which he did not observe, came out through the shadowed path, and a hand dropped upon his arm with a clinging, caressing touch.

"Darcy, oh, Darcy! I was listening, and I know all—Darcy! I did decide me back there at the village, for the rumor meant hopeless ruin to you; but I have forgiven you that with all the rest in the trouble which has come to you now. Did you think it would make a difference with me? You don't know how true a woman's love can be if you did."

"True, indeed, when it leads you to betray your share and mine in the work of eight years ago."

"I never did it, Darcy. I never betrayed any confidence of yours—not even the last and dearest one which you promised to make me your wife after all to be true, respected, long years. She discovered it herself—the woman you plotted against—and she never died, after all. There was some great mistake, or, perhaps, she spread the report herself to disarm you of suspicion. Either way she is alive to-night, and it is her work has unearthed the truth."

"Alive! Have you lost your senses, Faustina?" Darcy spoke in sharp, quick tones. "You were never particularly noted for having sense, I remember, but it is the most arrant nonsense you are talking now. It is impossible that Etiole should be alive."

They were the words and tone of a man struggling against a belief which he would rather not indulge, which was fastening upon him against his own will.

"It is solemn truth if I ever uttered it! She is alive, and I saw her—I saw her not two hours ago. It is she calling herself Mrs. Carroll, who has taken the old house on Wildbank Commons. I did not know her then; she is changed, and she kept her face shaded, but I saw her reflection in the mirror for one moment and all but recognized her then. I believe she identified me in the same instant with the count of eight years ago; she gave me such a terrible look it has haunted me ever since. She must have suspected something before. I remember now how, leading the subject indirectly, she persuaded me into offering to play and sing, and she must have caught some of the old familiar expressions in either my face or voice. It all flashed across me as I heard that man, Grandison, bringing his charges up against you."

"What a faculty you possess for making important discoveries a little too late. If you only might have anticipated any one of these little disasters, how you might have turned the tide. For instance, had you suspected the financial ruin which threatened my cousin along with you, would you not have made such desperate love to him, drawing the weak fool on to the very verge of a proposal, and thereby necessitating my interference and further play at love-making. Had you suspected our mutual embarrassments you might never have honored the Homestead with your presence at all. Had you got wind of the rumor in the streets a little earlier, the poor victim in there might be in blissful ignorance of his misery yet. Pity the 'if' in our lives is at once such a desperate race for such a trifling will-o'-the-wisp. Let me say good-night, Mrs. Leland; good-night and good-bye, most likely. This last intelligence of yours surpasses all the rest."

"Darcy, you shall not leave me yet—not in this way. All the rest of the world may desert you in this deep trouble which has come, but I never shall. Tell me where I may come to you, or let me go with you now. I couldn't stay here to face her when she comes to take her rightful place again, as she will. The thought of going back to the house after what has passed sends a dread through me. Let me go with you, Darcy, and I will be with you every night, our lives joined beyond power of any to part us."

"It is remarkable how obtuse you women can be on occasions. I don't especially desire to wound that delicate sensibility of yours—I never suspected you of possessing an element of that sort heretofore—but, 'pon honor!' it would take a greater inducement than any the prospect now holds out to burden me with such a charming model of art as yourself, my dear Faustina. Men have married wives who were *passé*, artificial, tenderly sentimental and thirty-seven, but never for sweet love's sake."

"Yet you loved me once, Darcy."

"A little mistake of yours, Mrs. Leland; not quite unfounded, perhaps, considering woman's proverbial vanity. I was forced to counterfeit the tender passion on two widely separate occasions. On the first you were scarcely to blame for believing; but this latter time—oh, Faustina!—you were surely too old a bird to be caught by such very apparent chaff."

"Darcy, take care! There is a limit to all human endurance, and I give you the last chance now to tie me to you by bonds of sincere devotion as your prospect scarcely could have done. Tell me that you were only trying me with that; take back those harsh, cruel, mocking words. Surely my long constancy to my first love deserves a better return."

"And such constancy!—you overwhelm me with the magnitude of your generosity, your sweetly forgiving, eagerly sacrificing spirit! One must wander so widely from the truth to accuse you of confiding innocence that I can only express again my surprise at the discovery of such unsuspected attributes in you—under plants so foreign to the soil. What a pity to let their fresh young growth in the very bud! I can't truthfully retract a single word—harsh, cruel and mocking though they may be. I never cared the turn of my hand for you in reality, Faustina—never for any woman indeed except one, and that one was Etiole Dupree, my cousin's wife. I don't mind giving you the secret of my plots against her, now that they have failed beyond hope of repair. Don't let me detain you, Mrs. Leland. Night dew is no aid to complexion at your age, besides being conducive to catarrhs, influenza, and such trifles of beauty, and really your claim that way grows slimmer every day."

Turning, he walked away with long, swift strides, and Faustina, half crouching where he left her, looked after him with eyes that were like phosphorescent points in the deep gloom. When he let himself out into the high-road, there was a dark figure creeping after, stealthily and closely following like a panther on the track.

The gloom lifted a little as he walked on toward the village. There was a moon which would be up presently, the faint light of which was reflected in a pale glow against the sky.

He was not paying any attention to the night sky above, to the sweet summer earth stretching around. The last drop of bitterness had been added to his cup of defeat. Etiole was alive! Etiole, whom he had both loved and hated—loved in defiance of his cool cynicism, his mercenary heart, his lifelong precept; hated because he had lost her, and through her lost also the chance of succession to his cousin's estates. She was alive and would be reunited to the husband from whom his duplicity had separated her, eight years before. He could have gnashed his teeth and ground out curses in the rage and despair sweeping over him, but Mr. Darcy Casselworth had not exercised an entire life of self-control and impassive demeanor to give way to such exhaustive and useless expressions of the turmoil filling his mind now.

Aleed of him to the right rose the mansion where his happy early wedded days had been passed. She had been such a bright, blithe creature, even through her most varying moods, when the young couple returned to take possession there after the wedding tour; she had been so sweet, so gentle, so wonderfully changed and improved a little later with the grace of her young motherhood upon her. There was no comfort to him in these remembrances. He would rather have the knowledge of that terrible fate which for seven long years he had believed to be hers, than one of those pleasant recollections; he would rather have known her to be the fair, false, frail creature his treacherous cunning had made her appear than the assurance of happy years yet in store for her.

He had stopped short in the road opposite the deserted mansion with these bitter thoughts in his mind. The moon coming suddenly up shed its soft full radiance over the scene, disclosing the wild, neglected aspect which had overtaken the place, straggling trees long untrimmed, rank weeds grown over the narrow strip of lawn, flowering plots and walks long since crowded out by them, the iron fence rusted and overgrown and broken away in places.

One of the gates at the front was open, and just within it a slender, tall shape was standing—a woman dressed in plain, dark garments, the covering fallen back from her head, the dark oval face looking softened and mournful and inexpressively lovely in the moonlight. She turned her head and saw him with a start. For a single second they looked into each other's faces, and then a cloud rushing swiftly up crossed the moon, blotting the fair scene into sudden darkness again. And in the brief space of silvery radiance neither had seen that other dark form crouching in the shadow at his back with burning eyes sweeping over all, yet never leaving him to look directly at any other object.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ARCH-SCHEMER'S FATE.

AUDREY, pacing slowly up and down one of those wide paths which bordered the lawn, a light silk scarf drawn loosely about her shoulders over the filmy white dress she wore, her short hair parted in that jaunty boyish fashion she particularly liked, and clinging about the slender throat in loose short curls, had the happiest of fancies to keep her company. "Love's young dream" is always much the same—a vague, sweet, illusive dream, all rose-tints and golden glory, fair mist floating before, the first blissful dream of inexperienced young hearts, none the less sweet because so fleeting. Audrey's rose-tints and golden glory faded before the real pleasure reflected in her face as a firm, springy step came over the lawn and she was joined by Carroll Dorchester.

He had come out with Grandison. The stock-broker, supposed by Darcy Casselworth to be in Pittsburgh during the day, had never left Cassel at all. During the morning he had dropped cautious hints and vague allusions here and there, which formed the foundation of the rumor that had spread all over the town before night. He had remained in Dorchester's private lodgings during the long afternoon, and the two sat together over an early dinner when the clerk returned, an hour before his usual time, from the office. Afterward the latter had strolled across to the Cassel House, and while there saw Mr. Casselworth come down, pausing in the door of the clerk's room.

"This note, Haines," he said, "I wish you would give to Grandison the moment he arrives. It's rather particular; so be kind enough not to let it slip your memory, and set me down a box of your prime Havanas there. I'll trouble you to open it, and take one for a walking companion; send the rest up to the rooms when Gilbert comes in."

The clerk complying, took down a box of cigars and glanced over his desk.

"I have mislaid my knife, Mr. Casselworth—have you one?"

"I must have forgotten it," the gentleman answered, searching his pockets vainly. "Never mind, then; I'm in some haste."

"Take mine, Haines," Dorchester offered, stepping forward, and remained standing until his employer, with another reference to the note, took his departure.

"I'll take the note if it's all the same to you," Dorchester remarked to the clerk, familiarly. "I'm sure to meet Grandison on the way here; I may even save him the entire distance from the station, considerable if he is to follow on to the Homestead, as I infer."

The clerk delivered it willingly enough, and five minutes after Grandison glancing at it confirmed his supposition of the contents.

"He is going to play sheep-dog in keeping the rumor from his cousin's ears, but he will find himself too late, I fancy. We will follow close to be at hand for the result, Dorchester."

They went together, taking the byway which led them across Wildbank Commons, having a glimpse at the carriage as it rolled from the low flats out upon the high-road. Etiole, expecting them, was at the gate, the glow of her late strong excitement upon her still. In a few words she told them of her discovery, her positive conviction that the Mrs. Leland of to-day was the false Count Barcelli, who had played a despicable part in forcing the deep dark injustice which had been done her, eight years before.

"With that missing link discovered at the last moment, Darcy Casselworth dare not refuse to vindicate my memory where he might even deny justice still, did he know me to be alive. I believe his enmity would be far-reaching and reckless of consequences before the smallest part of his hate of me should fail, did he know the truth."

A little pang was present with Dorchester as he parted with Grandison at the Homestead gates, and crossed over to join the tall, graceful shape, whose bright, fair face was already the sweetest sight earth held for him.

"She is all I loved to fancy the fair child whose pearl-like face was my inspiration in the dreamy days of my boyhood, whose recollection has lingered until it shadowed itself into an almost tangible hope. If her lover prove true—how can any man be any other than true to her? He deserves to lose her if a selfish consideration can weigh in the balance against

her love. Let my deserts overtake me if it is selfish to believe that Artrell is unworthy, utterly, of the preference she has given him. Thank Heaven that first loves are seldom more lasting than that mine is but the broad exception which proves the rule."

Audrey seeing him, advanced and offered her hand, smilingly.

"I had not expected this pleasure for the second time to-day," she said. "Who was that came in with you? Only half-recognized him."

"It was Grandison."

"Come in my mother's behalf?" she asked, quickly. "My heart has been echoing her hope all day that to-morrow may be a happier anniversary than any of these eight years past. I believe I was half-expecting some miracle to restore all to happy unity before to-morrow's dawn."

"Who knows but such a happy miracle may be wrought? Grandison comes in her behalf, as you have guessed; and if our hopes are not all dashed against the fair promise of compelling the truth from her arch-enemy, the husband who did her such deep injustice once shall know her for what she is—the truest, noblest, most wronged of faithful women."

"What a true friend you have been to her," she said, softly, deep, tender thankfulness in her dark eye. "It was noble and brave of you to aid in my mother's cause, traduced as she had been, hopeless of ever proving the deceptions of her enemy as she was at first."

"I was of her blood, and knew her to have been most unjustly judged. You can not hope for her vindication as I do, to-night, for the promise of it has not lingered in your thoughts as it has done in mine for years."

"And she knows how near the end is?" she asked, in suppressed eagerness.

"She knows and is waiting the result. I would have remained to help her bear the suspense of this last evening, but for her desire to be left alone. She is hopeful, fearful, prayerful and one can scarcely comprehend what deep emotions must sway her after all her years of waiting and suffering, now that the crisis is at hand. If the truth is told, you are to break to your father the fact that she lives, and prepare him to see her to-morrow, and I am to take the news back to her. The miracle of happy re-union may be wrought; pray Heaven that it shall be!"

They remained out there, talking in suppressed tones, waiting the result of that scene transpiring within. Drawn together by mutual sympathy as they were, tempering their impatience as they might, the time seemed long to both.

At last, however, Paul Grandison came forth, steeled and masterful as he had been in the late encounter, and, seeing them through the dim dusk, approached. Audrey advanced a step and stopped short, her heart fluttering with the hope and expectancy which, now that the decision was reached, her lips refused to form into words. Dorchester pressed forward eagerly.

"Did he confess?" he asked.

"He confessed. All is known at last. Miss Casselworth, it is left to you to make all explanations to your father—that your mother lives, that she is willing to see him, to forgive him even the terrible injustice which was done her, eight years ago. Are you going, Carroll? Let us not delay a moment in carrying the news to her, so long suffering, so eagerly expectant now. Good-evening, Miss Audrey."

She had not spoken a word, but there was an unuttered prayer of thankfulness in her heart. Dorchester put out his hand to take hers in his warm, sympathetic clasp for a second, then the two men walked away through the deep dusk, passing out from the grounds while Darcy Casselworth paused to glance back at the building which had stood through three generations of the family whose name he bore.

Lingering only for a moment while with silent thankfulness she realized all that had been accomplished, Audrey turned toward the house. The library door was ajar as it had been left. She pushed it open, a tender, deep pity coming over her at sight of that bowed and stricken figure. She crossed over to him, dropping her hand upon his arm.

"Papa!"

He looked up, his face ashen and despairing, stamped with the deep grief of a heart acknowledging its error too late.

"My daughter! My child, whom I wronged in wronging your mother, will you turn against me in this hour?"

"Papa, dear—"

"I did her such terrible injustice, Audrey. I believed her to be guilty and shameless through all these years—the truest and noblest of women. I was the weakest of dupes, the most pliable of unmeaning tools in the hands of a scheming villain. Her very blood cries out to me that I was the cause of her death, and of what anguish, what agony of humiliation to her proud spirit, what deep blow to her truest affections, I shudder to surmise."

"Papa, darling! You distress me; you are too harsh in the indictment of yourself. You did what you thought was your duty. If any part of it could be undone, papa, you would not hesitate in meeting true justice now."

"That is the hardest, Audrey. To know that she died under the ban of my cruelty. To never hear her say that I am pardoned my mad suspicions, which I thought verified. And I have nourished the enemy who did it all! More even than that; I would have taken the false woman who lent herself to aid his schemes in that injured angel's place! Life will be one tortured span of remorse from this time, and I deserve the torture."

"I may not be, papa. There may be greater blessing in store for you than you can comprehend now. If it had not been as it is; if my mother were alive to-day, you would not let her suffer under that cruel sentence which banished her from us—you would not, papa?"

"If she were alive, I would go down on my knees in the dust to pray for pardon. Too late—too late!"

It was a wall of anguish wrung from his remorse-stricken soul.

"Not too late, thank Heaven! The *Vixen* was lost with every soul on board, as we knew then, but it did not occur to you—it could not occur to any one, that my mother might not have been of those. Can you bear a great joyful surprise, papa, after the shock you have experienced to-night?"

He failed to grasp the hope which her tremulously eager tones, her almost definite assurance in words held out.

"There was not one saved. Child, child! It was a terrible sin committed in which I shall have to answer for my part."

"Listen to me, dear." She governed herself to be gentle and calm, seeing how terribly wrought upon his nerves were, how deep was his hopelessness and despair. "There is hope. Mamma never sailed in the *Vixen*—I am sure of that. Her passage was taken with that of her old invalid uncle, Victor Dupree; but his illness at the last moment detained them ashore. Their names were upon the list, but they were not of the unhappy passengers who perished with the ship. Shall I go on, papa?"

The ashen, startled face of the father grew intense with the sudden hope struggling against incredulity, which her words aroused.

"Yes, yes; go on!" he breathed, in an eager, hollow, whispering way.

"She went to Europe afterward with her invalid uncle—months afterward it was. Uncle Darcy's enmity had threatened to follow her into the sorrowful seclusion of her old home, which she had sought again, and for her own safety's sake—more perhaps as well—that her uncle died abroad at last, and she returned to America. She had one or two good friends working in her cause; at last through them she has won her vindication."

"Audrey!" He started to his feet with a gasping, comprehensive cry at that. "She is here—you have seen her, your mother. Don't deceive me; she is here!"

"She is very near. Papa, you must not excite yourself so. Sit down again until you are calm—do. She is not here, papa, but she will go soon—to-morrow. She is staying at Wildbank Commons and is known as Mrs. Carroll. You will go to her to-morrow; and oh, papa! think what a joyful anniversary of a sorrowful date!"

Alive and near him, willing to forgive and to be taken back to the heart which had wronged by doubting her! A sense of deeper, more peaceful happiness than any he had thought earth could hold for him was his in that moment. What prayerful thankfulness only the depths of his own soul knew.

"To-morrow, Audrey," he said, after a moment of utter silence. "I never could wait for to-morrow. We will go to her to-night—now. I could not rest without her pardon, knowing her so near me to-night."

She offered some protest, but, seeing how determined and eager he was, left him to order the carriage and Stephens' attendance at once, and to that faithful servant she gave a hurried repetition of that story which her father had just heard. Speeded by his grateful remembrances, Stephens lost no time. Ten minutes later the carriage was at the door. A few minutes later still it was bowling over the level road at a smooth, swift, and equal rate.

The occupants were silent, their hearts too full to prompt to speech. Elmer Casselworth had much to regret in the long, sorrowful past, but even his regrets were lost in this time of intense, hopeful expectancy. He had been more sure against than against whom the worst was taken into consideration, and the young, loving wife had not been without grave faults during the happiest of their married life. The divorced, injured wife had never been unjust to him, swayed by a sterner, subtler will than his own, believing only after his eyes had seen what seemed the evidence of her falsity, sparing her even then beyond the limit her action seemed to deserve. He thought only of seeing her again, the bright, lovely young creature whom he had wooed and won in her fair Southern home, the imperious, beautiful mistress of the stately mansion; he put away the remembrance of the dark, troublous after-time further than to reflect how he could sufficiently humble himself in pleading forgiveness for all she had been made suffer since.

They were coming close to the once fair modern mansion, deserted and overtaken by the ruin of neglect now, and he turned his face that way, dimly desecrating it through the gloom. There was a mass of cloud obscuring the moon which was slowly passing over. There was a silver edge breaking even then, and suddenly as the dark cloud had arisen it passed away.

Breaking away to disclose a scene which sent the blood curdling to the hearts of those beholding it.

A man's form stretched in the middle of the roadway, his face locked in the horror of the death agony, a dark stain in the white sand, a blade half buried in it glittering in the moon-rays.

Stephens drew his horses up with a quick jerk, then wheeled them about and brought his whip-lash down upon their flanks with a merciless severity of rapid blows which the animals had never before experienced from his indulgent hands. Too late! Others than himself had caught the sight—the motionless, prostrate form, and a woman's figure standing by the roadside, her hands wrung in a close clasp, her face stamped with a horror only less than the fallen, death-stricken one. The faithful servant recognized his kind mistress of old, the horrible suspicion if no worse which must attach to finding her there, and took the course his caution pointed at in all the same instant.

But the animals, never disobedient to his word before, balked under that tight curb and the sharp blows he rained upon them, balked and refused to head as he wished. Before he could regain his control over them his master's hand grasped the reins, dragging them away from him; the plunging, startled beasts fell back on their haunches; then, in a second, he had made a flying leap to the ground, and Stephens following gained the horses' heads.

For the first time in eight years Elmer Casselworth faced the wife he had cast off then, whom he had started to seek such a little time before, urged by an agony of remorseful conviction, ready to bow down in the abasement of self-accusation justly his due. But now that he was face to face with her stood erect and rigid as though the iron will of the fallen man might have passed to him. His lips turned gray, closed in a hard and painful line. The horror in his dilated eyes met an answering horror in hers over the form, dead or dying, which lay between.

Thus for an instant, then she put out her hands with the faint, choked cry: "Elmer!" and advanced a step.

He threw his hands up warningly, waving her away.

"Stand! back! Oh, my God! why should this curse of crime have come upon us? Keep back, I say! his blood must be between us now to the very last."

She recoiled before his hollow-voiced words, his abhorrent gesture, turning a mutely reproachful, amazed and sorrowful glance upon him.

Audrey, clinging with both hands as she leaned forward in the carriage, still swaying under the restive movements of the scarcely conquered animals, forgot her first terror to utter an indignant cry of protest.

"Papa, oh, papa!"

A cry which was followed by other exclamations as two more came upon the scene. The two were Grandison and Dorchester. At no great distance further on they had met the elderly woman-servant from Wildbank Commons. Mrs. Carroll, seeming excessively restless, had wandered out in this direction. Her own anxiety had prompted her to follow after a time, lest some fright rather than harm should come to her mistress; certainly they must have passed her on the way. A thought of the mansion came to Grandison to pierce the mystification which her positive assertion first called up. Etiole had most probably gone in to the tangled grounds, and they had passed silently and unsuspected in the obscurity. That had been the case indeed, and she had retraced her steps to the open gateway as her enemy, now her fallen foe in more senses than one, appeared on the spot.

The two faithful friends and tireless workers in her cause retraced their steps to come upon that scene, so unexpected, so horrifying, so terribly suggestive of what manner of meeting might have led to this result.

Darcy Casselworth lay upon a bed in a shadowed room of the Homestead, unmistakably

dying. The breath of life had been just flickering over his lips as they lifted him up and conveyed him back there in the stern silence, which was awe rather than pity or grief at this untimely fate which had overtaken him.

It was some two hours later now. The physician from the village had but just arrived, and with him Gilbert. The briefest examination on the part of the former disclosed the fact that mortal aid was past for the wounded man. He had been stabbed repeatedly in the back with that sharp, glittering blade some one of them had taken up from where it was imbedded in the sand—his own knife it was recognized to be.

Dorchester had gone before to prepare the household for the coming shock. There had been a little stir, quickly repressed; then Miss Mallory and the housekeeper had busied themselves with the preparations the occasion required. The wounded man had been lifted from the carriage, driven at the slowest, eastward pace and carried in, to be placed on the last couch his living form should press.

All had been done with such silent dispatch it was not remarkable that Mrs. Leland should not be apprised of the calamity until the maid, Celine, answering her bell, poured out the drift of all the servants had been discussing in suppressed tones where they had gathered in little knots in halls and stairways. The lady was shocked into such a turn as Celine, a tolerable reader of human nature in her own way, had by no means expected. Recovering from the fainting-fit which had overtaken her, Mrs. Leland made her way to that shadowed room, her face scarcely less white than the snowy wrapper she wore.

"Let me pass. I have the right to be with him," she said, in the level, quiet tone of intensest agitation strongly repressed, when some question was raised as to the propriety of admitting her.

She had kept her place at the bedside, unmoving, ever since, her eyes never stirring from the deathlike face upon the pillows, her own breath scarcely more apparent than that fluttering over the colorless lips of the dying man.

Audrey was with her mother in her own room, waiting the certain result of the tragedy. While they waited, Etiole explained her presence on the spot at that fatal moment well as she might for the agitation of that sudden transition from the brightness of her hope to blank despair.

Looking up from her position by the gateway to see her enemy not a dozen paces away, a sudden panic had overtaken her. Under cover of the swift darkness which succeeded she had turned to fly through the grounds toward the mansion, with the vague impulse of hiding herself there, somewhere, away from the man who had proved himself such a bitter and unscrupulous foe. She fancied a sharp cry had pursued her, but it might have been her own labored, gasping breath. She had crouched down in the midst of the thickest shrubbery, close to the walls of the mansion, hoping to elude his search, but moments passed and no sound warned her of any approach. After a time she had reasoned herself into the belief that she had been the victim of an optical delusion—the result of the strong emotions and excitement bearing upon her these last few days. The belief grew as she left her cover to carefully reconnoiter before venturing forth. No human being seemed in sight, and it was not until she stepped out from the gateway that the prostrate, death-stricken form caught her eye and held her there, fascinated as it were with intense horror.

Neither of them breathed the other nameless horror weighing upon the hearts of both, but the single prayer which surged continuously through Audrey's mind in that hour was that a moment of consciousness might come before the inevitably impending death, during which Darcy Casselworth might accuse his murderer. The prayer was a vain one. In the shadowed, silent chamber the watchers about the bed could not tell when the ghost of breath left the death-like lips. The physician with his touch where the faint pulse had been drew his hand away, with a glance at the grave, waiting faces about him. The plotter, who had worked so much sorrow beneath that sheltering roof, would weave no further trouble with the brain which had been so active, so unscrupulous, but the very retribution which had overtaken him was threatening a danger deeper than any his treachery had wrought.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 178.)

Somnambulism.—A certain number of people (a small percentage, it is true, compared to the total, and yet a considerable number in themselves considered) are as restless, as active, physically or mentally, or both, when asleep as when awake, although unconscious of this fact themselves. In other phrases, they are somnambulists. Now, the term somnambulism, although it literally means walking in sleep, has, in common parlance, been accepted as signifying a state of either physical or mental activity during sleep, whether manifested by active exercise of the body or of the mind. And as a general rule it may be stated that somnambulism is much more frequently talked about than understood. The peculiar nature of this state, or complaint, affliction, or affection, has always rendered it a subject of considerable mystery, and therefore of considerable interest.

There are three varieties of somnambulism, known to be initiated as the simple, the morbid, and the artificial or magnetic. Nervous people are especially prone to somnambulism. The bilious and the lymphatic escape with comparative immunity. Out of eighteen cases of somnambulism examined in regard to temperament, seventeen were found to be of the pure nervous, while one-eighteenth was of the mixed or nervous bilious temperament. In these nervous cases somnambulism generally takes place during or after some period of more than usual excitement, or when a course of dissipation and late hours has been adhered to for some time; or—and this is the most common cause—when the stomach or the digestive system is in an unhealthy condition. Occasionally, however, somnambulism will occur where the party is in the possession of the utmost health, and has been leading the most regular and quiet life.

Morbid somnambulism is a more decided state of the disorder, and is preceded by peculiar symptoms, such as lassitude, headache, paleness, loss of appetite, etc. A tendency to sleep during the daytime is also a characteristic premonitory symptom of this disorder. Then suddenly the patient falls into a trance, and in this trance the most singular phenomena will occur, of which the patient will be unconscious. A tendency to incessant talk is one of the most striking signs of this trance or fit, and the language employed is often of a higher order than that used by the speaker during waking and consciousness. A second peculiarity of morbid somnambulism is that the language or ideas employed during one trance-fit are seldom or never used during another. The individual during his or her waking moments will be, when somnambulant, as full of variety of thought, imagery, and elegant expression, as a Macaulay or a Madame de Staël.

Saturday Journal

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The active characters in the WOLF DEMON are the great forest-brothers in border craft, Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton, when they first entered upon the career in which they became so celebrated. These Great Hearts and strong arms were, however, mastered by the strange unknown, whose signet-mark of an arrow cut on the breast of each red victim baffled even their sagacity to understand. The hunter, Abe Lark, is, in many respects, a most wonderful man, skilled in the craft and cunning of the savage, yet, withal, a very admirable fellow. Then the introduction of the two young women—one the petted daughter of the Forest Garrison, and the other the shunned child of the renegade—and the complications springing out of their relations and dangers, add to the story an interest that becomes, as the narrative progresses, absorbing and sustaining. The WOLF DEMON is, in fact, two stories woven into one—each having elements of rare originality and power.

Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—In our "Answers" we have to say to a correspondent that no extraneous influences can induce an acceptance of matter for our columns. This ought to be understood; but it seemingly is not, for a large number of persons tell us of their needs—for their efforts to obtain a living—of a desire to earn money for some specific object, etc. In order to constrain our judgment. An editor who could be influenced by other than purely literary considerations would make up a queer paper, or, what is worse, would ruin his publisher. While all possible sympathy might be entertained for an author's distress, sympathy is not what the situation demands: stern, unbiased, correct judgment is the editor's watchword.

Some of our poets, it pleases us to state, are growing greatly in public favor. We certainly publish some very good things; and, discriminating closely, as we usually do, in regard to accepted poetic contributions, authors are learning to understand that an acceptance is no small honor. What is peculiar is that, almost without exception, the best poems are free offerings—are written not for pay but because they want utterance. Where the author speaks of pay, or demands his price, we are almost certain, before reading a line, that the work is inferior, and in nine cases out of ten the inference is correct. Not that poets ought not to write for pay; by all means let them obtain pay where that is possible; but he or she who writes poetry for the love of it, or because it writes itself, are pretty sure to do a good thing, and that is their best reward.

Our popular author, Oil Coomes, has "come at us" with another great romance of the woods. He writes of it: "I send by express, to-day, ONE ARMED ALF; or, THE GIANT SCOUT OF THE GREAT LAKES, which I feel proud in pronouncing my happiest effort." It must, then, be a splendid work, for Oil Coomes has written for our columns some romances that do credit to American literature and authorship. The readers of the SATURDAY JOURNAL regard him with a real affection—which is a delightful reason for author, publisher and public. The new story will be eagerly welcomed.

If our authors will grow enthusiastic over the SATURDAY JOURNAL we don't see how we can help it. One writes: "It is the Best Literary Paper on Earth," which is saying something. The writer is a capital authority in literary matters—that we know; so we suppose we must "confess judgment." One writing from Hanover, Pa., gives this interesting item: "The general cry is that the SATURDAY JOURNAL is rapidly advancing; per consequence you are swallowing up the SATURDAY JOURNAL." Bad for the under dog, certainly. We don't wish to enjoy prosperity at the expense of loss to our cotemporaries, but, if readers will leave other papers to read ours, we certainly shall not deny them that privilege.

One of the large family of Old Time is indignant at his omission from the genealogical catalogue recently published by the venerable BEAT TIME, and thus publicly expresses himself in a private letter to the offending party:

"MR. BEAT TIME:—

"DEAR SIR:—In giving the names and noting the many illustrious personages of the Time family, I find that you have totally ignored myself—Behind Time. Whether this is a mistake done on purpose, or that you have entirely forgotten your old relative, is more than I know. But no mention is made of my name, although my brother, On Time, is spoken of in high terms.

"Have I been banished from the old family record, without knowing it? or, is it because the rest of you have got so 'stuck up,' that you are ashamed to own any relationship to one who is perhaps a little behind, when he has his work to do?

"Now, I go in for equal rights, and if you don't give me mine, there will be a family feud immediately. I'll tell of every mean thing I know of against you! I'll—but there; I will say nothing desperate, for I know that if you have any of the old Time principle, you will rise and explain.

Yours,

BEHIND TIME."

LETTERS.

Did you ever get moved up?

I don't mean in a great poky railway car, where everybody is just as fretful and hateful as they can be, and you hate to ask a civil question for fear of being growled at and swallowed alive, and each one looks as though he or she had been feeding on pickles all their lives, and they hadn't agreed with them.

I don't refer to that untold misery, but really in your own dear homestead in the country—away back among the icy mountains—and three good miles from the post-office, and no sign of the mail (if you spell that last word male, Mr. Printer, I'll get my brother Tom to have a talk with you) for a week. I wouldn't wonder a bit but some of you readers have been in that predicament.

Oh, you needn't think one is to be pitted at such a time, because assedly he is not; such a person has more cause to be envied, for, taking our own case as an example, we just go to

the book-case and take out our letters and read them, and isn't it indeed a treat?

Some of them brim over with life and vivacity, merriment peeping out in every line, and with such a lot to write that the one who sent it hadn't time to stop to dot her "i's" or cross her "t's," and, as for punctuation, there isn't enough to fill the eye of a needle—just as though life was some large playground and we'd nothing to do but just play "tag" all the time.

Then comes school-girl notes, with protestations of never-dying friendship and eternal love and affection, followed by another missive from the same correspondent, in which she accuses us of treachery and partiality, because we prompted Sarah Niles in the grammar lesson and did not prompt her. We felt bad at the time, but a few bomboms settled all that, and we were good friends again.

Kindest of all are those motherly letters, when we were away from home—epistles filled with such good and pure advice, that only a fond and true mother can write—emanating from a heart that still beat for us, though we were many miles away from her dear self. Did we not treasure those letters? Shall we ever part with them this side the grave?

And then those postscripts printed by the hand of some little brother and sister that had "so much to say," and yet compressed it all into these words, "Do come home."

Maybe you'll come across editors' letters, some of which you remember sent you into the seventh heaven of happiness, because they contained the announcement of your story's acceptance; perhaps, also, a greenback. Others plunged you into the lowest depths of despair as they brought the heart-rending news that your articles were declined, which even the added "with thanks" did not solace your griefs much.

Sorrowful notes come in order, and our hearts ache at the sufferings of those around us, suffering caused by the deaths of loved and endeared ones, and we pause in our reading to cast a look at the graveyard away in the distance, that seems so cold, and then to glance at a picture of Pilgrim at the Heavenly gates, where every thing betokens eternal joy. It does us good to read these letters—it shows us that we, too, must soon follow the dear ones and be at rest.

Letters, brotherly and sisterly, some from those whom we may never have seen, but whom we have learned to love through a correspondence.

What should we do were it not for this interchange of thoughts through the medium of letters?

If I couldn't get a letter, or write one, I would just esteem it a great favor if some one would kindly put me in the cavity of a rock and hermetically seal the entrance, for I'd as soon be buried alive as to live without letters.

I haven't said anything about love letters, eh? What's the use? Were there ever two alike, or were there ever two dissimilar? You know they're something like, "two's company, three's none." You can keep your love misadventures to yourself, and I will do the same with mine—that is, if I get any. Any more than I have, I mean.

EVE LAWLESS.

GIRLS!

A WOMAN'S VIEW OF THEM.
SWEET, fluttering, giddy, foolish creatures—girls! The butterflies of our human garden, as thoughtless, as brilliant, and alas! with wings as readily bruised. How the young matrons, who were girls themselves not very long since, and have seen the folly of it, long to remodel the class, to shake down some of that feathery lightness, which has never had a care to ballast it, to instill some of their own newly found wisdom into those pretty heads. Perfection is never perfect on earth, and girls will be girls to the end of the chapter no doubt, and, though we may sigh for more stability and more consideration, we would not have them any thing else, remembering that the price of wisdom is experience—hard, wearing experience—which will come soon enough.

Each pretty, willful creature is apt to find a master by and by, not necessarily a hard master, but one who will not always interpret aright the vagaries which are inseparable from the girl-nature, who will sometimes laugh or be vexed at those tender, gushing inspirations, who can not understand why the girl-wife should fidget if he is five minutes late to tea, or suffer agonies when he goes off for a day's jaunt with a friend and leaves only a dash at the door to inform her of the fact, while she is in doubt whether the chance of a pleasant comitative power or the chance of a pleasant explosion on his way. These are the beginnings of the cares which transform her from the girl, for some clever writer has hit the truth in saying: "Men were made to be worried about." As a consequence, women were made to worry about them.

Much as is said in this day about woman's sphere, her lack of proper discipline and practical educational advantages, all of these would not suffice to put an old head on a girl's shoulders. Of a dozen girls educated to take care of themselves compared with one who have danced through life, it is probable that eleven of the first will take lifelong burdens upon themselves to every one of the latter. They fall in love with a necktie, a mustache, a profile, and they marry the creature representing these, whose only germ of common sense has been displayed in choosing a clever girl, with a full knowledge of his present unfavorable prospects, and every faith in his grand talents and abilities to execute. They cling to the delusion fondly, they put their own willing, able shoulders to the wheel, and discover at last that, instead of their burdens being lightened, they are clogged with a weight that shall drag like a millstone about their necks all their lives long. The weak creature, who is not a man, has his pampered tastes, which must be gratified. Whether the world revolves or not he must have his wines and cigars, his neckties, his spotless suits, his immaculate linen, and the aching head and toiling fingers which supply all these are the least consideration his complacent mind dwells upon. If he is not a vicious creature, he may speak often of the time when he shall come upon an opening that will neither compromise his dignity nor degrade his talent shall occur, when the toiling wife shall rest and he will operate the machinery of labor, which shall be all cogs and wheels, and pulleys to turn at a touch with never one of the rough jars, or straining to make two ends meet, which so wear upon her now. Such hopeful words bring cheer at first, but, when their emptiness has been thoroughly sounded, they only suffice to stir the dregs of bitterness and add to the weariness that will know no rest short of the last one, deep and narrow, away from the reach of summer storms and winter snows and earth's trials forever.

It is not that I would say one word against the noble work of educating our girls to usefulness, which may be turned to their own account, or the account of dear, dependent ones, but how much more efficient would the work be could it teach those hopeful girls to distinguish between gold and glitter, if it would mingle caution with the too easy credulity, too great expectancy, which mark the class.

J. D. B.

Foolscap Papers.

Whitehorn's Street Railroad.

My new street railroad is now ready for the accommodation of the traveling public.

This track, like all other tracks of the proprietor, is straight, and reaches from Alpha to Omega streets.

These cars on this line, for beauty and speed, have never been surpassed; at least, you will say they are very fast when you are running to catch up with one of them.

These cars will not be allowed to contain any more passengers than they will hold. This rule is for the convenience of the public, who will please return thanks.

When no more can get aboard, there will be plenty of room for the balance to walk behind, at half fare.

Unprotected gentlemen who are obliged to sit down while ladies are enjoying themselves by standing up in these cars, will receive the commiseration of the proprietor upon complaint at this office.

The ladies will not be expected, on this line, to give up seats for a gentleman.

Parties who are crowded out can ride on deck of the mules on paying double fare.

Pickpockets will not be allowed to ride in these cars, unless they can show a regular license and a good moral character.

If the conductor fails to let you out at the right place, you will have the privilege of riding to the next street free.

If a gentleman has the faintest kind of an idea that some burly fellow has come down with his whole weight on his most delightful corn, he will have the inalienable right of all free-born American citizens to kick the offender—if he thinks it would be wholesome. N. B.—This road will not be responsible for damage.

These cars will not be expected to go off the track and turn up a cross-street just for the accommodation of one or two passengers. We won't do it, and you needn't think it.

People getting run over must do so at their own risk, as this kind of work is getting too common, and the conductor will not allow anybody to run over him.

No stop-over checks will be given on this route; and I wish it distinctly understood that no man will be permitted to ride on two cars at once, when going different directions.

At no time shall these cars go faster than a one-legged horse can trot.

The conductors in making their cash-receipts to head-quarters are earnestly requested to try and divide equally.

As no car-hooks will be allowed on these cars, passengers are requested to furnish their own.

Ladies are respectfully requested not to smoke in the gentlemen's faces.

Each passenger's baggage will be limited to three valises, two bandboxes, one market-basket, a step-ladder and a clothes-horse.

If you wish to go in one direction and all the cars are going another way, it would be a good idea for you to wait, as in making up the timetable I have provided plenty of time for waiting.

To persons who prefer to ride, these cars will be far better than walking.

In crowded cars, persons coming from market with two or three dozen eggs tied up in a handkerchief, half of them too ripe, may make a little more by walking, unless they think they can do better by riding.

For the benefit of the universal traveling pub, and to prevent everybody from missing a car, every car will stop just one hour at every cross-street on the route; this will give each one ample opportunity to get aboard without any hurrying; and it is better always to be an hour too soon than an hour too late, unless it is at your own hanging. I hope everybody will severely thank me for this. I only live, move and eat a good deal for the benefit of mankind, who are my brothers—and sisters.

When the driver doesn't stop for you, don't miss him when you urge a rock in his direction and make it go through a window.

We employ no three-legged horses on this route, but all were selected at great expense; and, as young horses are apt to get vicious, I ones, blind on one eye and blind on the other, are less likely to get scared at every thing they might see, and they go along almost without a word, almost without beating. They all have false teeth.

The fare will be five cents each way; but if you haven't any money, we won't charge you any thing. This is fair enough. I don't intend to try to make money out of this. My credit is good—at some new stores just started; but if any one desires to pay the fare over two or three times, we will endeavor to accommodate.

There will be no sleeping-cars on this line, at present, but we will soon have them.

All aboard. It is a good deal nicer to ride with us than to be kicked down street; far better.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Woman's World.

The Growing Vice.—Hotel Life the Social Upas.

That the proclivity to scandal and gossip is on the increase in Woman's World is a fact which is the observant of "the sex." The gradually increasing numbers of those who seek boarding-houses and hotels, in order to be rid of the troubles of housekeeping, materially recruit the great army of gossips, for boarding-houses are simply nurseries of scandal. Then the increasing numbers of those who, for two months of each year, go to some fashionable summer resort, add another installment to the "serial" of scandal; and thus, from a mere multiplicity of remarks, we have a sudden growth of the wretched habit of talking of our neighbors which is both alarming and disgusting.

Home life is not propitious to scandal. The wife and mother has, there, something else to think of than the faults of her foes and the foibles of her friends, and her visitors and visitations are not either so numerous or so prolonged as to make an inquest over another lady's character thorough and satisfying. It is the gregarious hotel or boarding-house life that gives the time, occasion and material so necessary to a thorough overhauling of the affairs of other people; and a shrewd writer and observer of society at home and abroad gives it as a pretty well-established fact that, in any community, there is very little *injurious* gossip and "they say" title-tattle that has not its origin in the hotel or boarding-house.

The women of these living places, relieved of all household cares, find time hanging heavily on them. They have, literally, nothing to do but eat, dress and shop, by day; to dance, gossip and kill time, by night. They are all acquainted with one another, for they meet daily, week after week, and if they are not on terms of intimacy, or if they do not know each other, you may be sure they know all about one another. It does not take a smart woman three days to find out every thing she deems necessary about her neighbor, the lady across the hall. She knows what her name is, the occupation of her husband, an approximation of his income, the number of horses they own, whether the lady keeps a maid or

not, how they live at home, how many dresses the lady has, whether they are fashionably made and fit her nicely, how many diamonds she has, and whether her husband goes to bed drunk. All these facts being obtained, gossip is set at work to find out what there may be in the past life of the lady under surveillance and her family, whether there is anything piquant that may be discovered. In due time it is known whether the lady has been married more than once, whether her first husband died and left any property, whether it was a love match, whether there was any previous jealousy, how long her widowhood lasted, whether she was married twenty-four hours after meeting her present husband, whether there is now a perfect understanding between them, whether they quarrel, whether she faints, whether her hair has been bleached, whether she pencils her eyes and darkens the lashes, and a hundred other things which contribute to the interest and piquancy of the investigation, and exposition. When a new boarder arrives, or a stranger comes into that select hotel circle, and passes from her room to the parlor, from the parlor to the wide corridor, and thence to the dining-room, her raiment is subjected to a closer inspection than is bestowed upon a suspicious-looking character arriving at a custom-house; but this is nothing to complain of, for every lady passes through this ordeal when she goes to church, or when she presents herself anywhere in public.

This is just the daily life-record of women in almost every great hotel in the land; and, in a modified degree, in every boarding-house, an amusing repetition of which fact comes to us in the letter of a visitor at a noted summer hotel, during the stormy days of August, when the guests of the great human caravansera were house-bound. The writer says:

"I have heard enough during the three days of the storm to fill a volume as large as a dictionary, and if I believed it all, I should not dare to be seen with any lady of the house except my grandmother. I have heard that such a lady in her younger days was a circus rider. I have heard that another was a chambermaid. I have heard that another was divorced from two husbands. I have heard that another plays cards for money when at home; that another deals in stocks, bonds and horses, and consorts with jockeys in order to get an idea of the winning horse; that another, celebrated for her diamonds and fine clothes, was formerly a clerk in a dollar store in New York; that another kicks her children and laments her maid; that another gets intoxicated every night; that half a dozen ladies, names mentioned, dare not go into the surf because they are afraid of losing their complexions; that one lady, whose daily treatment of servants and guests of the hotel is not of the most refined character, refused to sit at table beside some of the most distinguished of the hotel guests on the ground that they were parvenues; and I have heard enough else to drive the quiet wife who stays at home and takes care of the babies crazy. But it is all gossip; there's not a word of truth in any of it."

Not only no truth in it, but such a deal of wickedness and demoralization that the very atmosphere of a hotel becomes contagious with the elements of this social poison; and the wife who courts the ease and idleness of boarding-life will be surely become a scandal-monger and a common nuisance as the man who frequents the race-course and the bar-room will become a loafer.

Moral: Live in two rooms of your own—keep house under every disadvantage—rather than recruit the army of women whose unwearied hands and untaxed brains fashion patterns for the devil's workshop.

WHERE THE PRECIOUS METALS COME FROM.

THE idea generally prevails that all our gold and silver come from the Far West, but such is not the case. The precious metals are known to exist in "paying" deposits in many localities of the Union.

Gold is now found and mines worked in Vermont, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Kansas, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon, and California. Maryland shows but \$108 for her total, Vermont \$5,615, and Kansas \$1,000. California has contributed in twenty-four years \$643,121,499; North Carolina's total is \$9,865,253, and Georgia \$7,250,000. Virginia and South Carolina have each over a million. In addition to the thirteen gold-bearing States are the ten Territories, from Arizona to far-off Sitka, and from Dakota, on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains, to Washington Territory on the Pacific. The smallest quantity is from Sitka, \$397; the largest from Montana, \$30,648,265. And Montana is one of the newest of the Territories. Colorado shows \$2,398,421, and Idaho \$17,141,523. With two, or perhaps three exceptions, all of these Territories bear silver also.

The largest product of silver is from Nevada, which, since its first settlement—say twenty years ago—has furnished the mint and branches with \$8,539,898 in silver. The next largest production is \$1,114,543, from Colorado, and the next from the copper and lead mining region of Lake Superior, \$1,063,541. Utah, although the mines are only just opened, prior to June 30 had sent to the mint \$261,103 in silver, and \$164,147 in gold.

The aggregate value of the gold and silver bullion deposited in the mint and its branches since the date of their establishment is \$836,205,463, and of this enormous amount more than \$780,000,000 have been the domestic product of our own gold and silver-bearing States and Territories within the last twenty-four years. Whatever other commodity we may need from other countries, we certainly stand in but little want of their bullion, and yet, such is our fearful national extravagance, that steadily the current of coin sets toward Europe, and our debt abroad, to-day, would more than consume four times more gold than is now existing here as coin! This indebtedness abroad will have a fearful day of reckoning for us.

THE WOLF DEMON, as a story of astonishing interest, has for some of its chief incidents the following:

Daniel Boone on his first great trail—

A strange Apparition of the Woods—

Demon or man, or both combined?—

The Red Arrow on every breast—

A Forest Beauty with the Grace of Rippling Waters and Dancing Leaves—

Another Beauty with the Grace of the Swaying Ash and the Crimson Maple—

A Dastard; Traitor to his race and kind—

The Grand Forest Prince, Simon Kenton—

Men of the Border—true lion hearts—

Savages as sleepless as hungry tigers—

The pilgrimage in the pathless woods—

A forest foe and the lone cabin.

Each of which, in the author's cunning hand, are as new creations, true to history as history itself, yet having nothing whatever in common with the ten thousand and one Tales of the Wilderness that traverse the literary field. The story created a profound impression when first printed; it will be received with immense enthusiasm now.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unusable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not sent or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS., as "copy," third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. The *Constitution* style is preferred, but not insisted upon, and copy and composition, leaving off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its copy, or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. May MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention. Correspondents must refer to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write every receipt in special care.

We say no to "Summer Days," "The First Mystery of a Life," "Is Right?" "Pen Pictures," "Dag Hanaway," "Chats with Sailors," the several contributions remitted by Col. A. B.: "A Mountain Adventure," "Mother's Love," "The Ringers of the Rauche," "Miss Neville's Party."

The following we reserve for further consideration: "A Belle's Heart," "Mated but not Matched," "A Will after Death."

The essays by H. N. B. we can not find room for at present. If not ordered back, will preserve for future consideration.

The following we will try and find place for, viz.: "Shut the Door," "The Secret to the Farm," "Recapitulating a Prize," "The Human Heart of a Good-natured Man," "Will of the Wisp," "A Comic Tragedy," "The Mill of the Rocks," "Speaking by the Card."

H. L. Serials to be of avail must be particularly good. We never have room for commonplace matter. Your needs excite our sympathies, but were they ten times as great they could not win an acceptance of contributions not up to our standards.

BERRY. There are a great number of pure Anglo-Saxon words in our language. Indeed, it is said, we could speak with great fluency and force and use only such words. They are, almost without exception, beautiful and significant.

ELISE B. Send to Vick, of Rochester, for his Catalogue of Fall Plants. "The Garden of the Future" are admirable as garden instructors, giving, as they do, explicit directions regarding cultivation, etc.

HOBARTTOWN. The public debt of France is now equal to five times the national debt of the United States, and more than twice the national debt of the United States. France, yet talks as freely of a future war with Germany, to "punish" the Germans for the overthrow of Napoleon's armies and the humiliation of the French nation, as if she had no load to carry. Another war with Germany would be a disaster to both.

PADDY O'WHACK. Potatoes were first introduced to Ireland from America, in the year 1586. Prior to that time the chief food of the Irish common people was oatmeal, fish and game. Indeed, the potato and tobacco were all were unknown in the Old World until their discovery in America.

A. G. H. Cold cream is a term applied to a mild and

pleasant preparation for dressing the skin. It may be prepared by heating gently four ounces of olive oil and one part of white wax, until a uniform liquid mass is obtained, when a little color and scent may be added. The mixture is then allowed to cool until it has become the whole time of its cooling so as to prevent the contraction and consequent separation of the wax.

SAILORS. The first steamship that crossed the Atlantic was the Savannah, which was built in Savannah, Ga., making the trip in six days, and from thence to Liverpool, England, making the run across in eighteen days. The first steamship to cross the Atlantic, 1819, and when she was despatched into the harbor at Quarantine, the commander of the English fleet believed her to be on fire, when he observed the smoke issuing from her smoke-stack, and immediately ordered the vessel under way to run to her assistance. Since 1819 the run across has been made in nine instead of eighteen days, and doubtless in another half-century the trip will be made in half that time.

SOLDIER. The word lieutenant is now not generally in use, though in the English army it is often heard. Lieutenant is considered correct, for the word was written lieutenant—pronounced lieutenant—on account of the letter y being then used instead of u, as is now the case.

INQUIRER. Yes, there are cases known of persons having completely lost the senses of smell and taste. A case is in our memory where a man could not distinguish between the taste of jelly or molasses, and bitters and sweet wine. Several other people have no eye for colors, and can not distinguish black from blue.

MAUD M. G. Methist is a sub-species of quartz, of a bluish violet color. It is not very valuable, and is wrought into various articles of jewelry. It was generally thought, in olden times, to be a remedy for drunkenness, so that persons wearing this stone, was not liable to intoxication.

SEAMAN. There is a fresh-water spring in the ocean, off the coast of Florida, and there vessels take in water when needed; but we know of no such spring on the Atlantic. They of course exist, but are not of sufficient volume to reach the ocean surface.

BRIDE. Orange blossoms are considered most appropriate for the wedding, and are very fragrant and beautiful. The tuberose blossom is equally fragrant and proper, where orange blossoms are not attainable.

LESTER. A large and fine oriental ruby is of great value. The inferior rubies are of various colors, and are wrought into various articles of jewelry. It was generally thought, in olden times, to be a remedy for drunkenness, so that persons wearing this stone, was not liable to intoxication.

NATHAN. Mr. Jack Robinson was a volatile gentleman, who, when calling upon his neighbors, was off again "before you could say Jack Robinson." Hence, the origin of the expression now so well known.

NORTON. It is said to be engraved on the tomb of Salvinus Amatus, the credit for the invention of spectacles, but really was invented by an Italian, who was the first to use of them we believe was in the 13th century. A hint of their value is given in the writings of Alaxan, who lived in the 12th century, and in the works of Roger Bacon, who died A. D. 1292.

ARTIST. Photography is not entirely a new art, as the effect of light on chloride of silver was known as far back as the high century. The smallest quantity is from Sitka, \$397; the largest from Montana, \$30,648,265. And Montana is one of the newest of

THE SONG WE SING.

BY JOSEPH PLACKETT.

When winter leads the earth in chains,
Despite its blasts, its frosts, its pains,
With all our woes there still remains
To cheer our hearts, some happy strains.

The opening spring has beauties rare
In sweet perfumes and blossoms fair—
In wild birds' songs that fill the air
With joyful music everywhere.

The summer's growing fullness, too,
Brings gladness to our hearts anew:
We feel its passing days too few,
As hurriedly time bears them through.

But autumn, golden autumn, see,
It is, with lavishments most free,
Hangs luscious fruits on vine and tree,
And tunces our hearts in highest glee.

It is no empty song she sings:
Not she the empty harp brings:
Fruitful to her mantle clings,
And plenty's shadow tips her wings.

Then let us sing when she is here,
The gladdest season of the year:
In voices loud and accents clear,
A song to autumn, welcome, dear!

Ida Searle's Fortune.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

The front piazza of the solitary hotel at "Shady Retreat," a picturesque little village where a certain "set" of city people rusticated every summer—was crowded with a party of young folks, that made a charming picture that warm August morning.

"And you are sure you can not—or will not go with us, Mr. Florestan?"

It was the belle of the party who spoke, Leila Lynington, in whose melodious voice lurked a familiarly confidential tone as she raised her wondrously sunny eyes to the gentleman's fine face.

And Alvan Florestan felt an unnatural, yet withal very delightful tumult about his heart as he looked back at pretty Leila.

She was remarkably pretty, too, this Hebe-like girl, with her tall, willowy figure, and a complexion that somehow resembled one of liquid pearls shot with dashes of molten rubies; then her large, lustrous eyes, sometimes blue as the June skies, then opaline to transparency; wide, clear eyes, shadowed by heavy curling golden-brown lashes, just the color of her mass of flowing, clinging hair that shone so in the sunlight.

Proud, beautiful Leila Lynington—and she was in love with Alvan Florestan!

All this while he had made no answer; it seemed enough to him that he was looking away down in her soul through those clear windows—then with a half-veiled remembrance of the fact that a dozen pairs of eyes were watching them, he threw off the sweet trance.

"I am sorry you insinuate that I do not wish to accompany the party. Indeed, Miss Lynington, I know of nothing I would like as well, only—"

Guilio Clyn's merry voice arrested his hesitating reservation.

"Yes, only! and we all understand what that means well enough, Mr. Florestan. You see, if some of us are country girls, we have heard of that charming lady at Long Branch, whither you have betaken yourself so often."

Guilio's merry, mischievous eyes were on him; but he did not seem to be at all abashed.

"That Long Branch lady again, Miss Clyn! Really now, I doubt if that gay spot can produce any thing so attractive to me as I find here at Shady Retreat."

His laughing face in no ways disconcerted gay Guilio.

"Oh, thank you—in behalf of the party! Then, as you're not going to lend the grace of your magnificent presence on our tour to the sequestered hut, I propose we waste no more valuable time. Leila, you are ready? Ida, you and Carrie have the shawls?"

Miss Lynington's lip curled just the merest trifle.

"I am ready, thank you. Mr. Florestan, I suppose I may bid you good-morning?"

"Only don't be so icy, please," he pleaded, laughingly, yet with a light in his eyes that sent the glad blood to Leila's heart; then he turned to little Ida Searle.

"It's too bad, isn't it, Miss Ida, that the ladies are all so severe because I've a particular errand down to York that must be seen to. You'll take my part, I'm sure."

Ida's cheeks grew suddenly as scarlet as the shawl she was carrying over her arm; she looked up for a moment into Alvan Florestan's handsome face, then glanced half-deprecatingly at Miss Lynington's stern features.

"Pray do not refer to me, Ida, so mutely. Perhaps you had better remain home, so that you can console Mr. Florestan on his return from York!"

Then she went down the steps in her own queenly way, never noting the look of pain that flashed upward from the Searle's pale face; and little would she have cared had she seen.

But I think her new-born triumph would have been laid low could she have seen the sudden gleam of amazement in Mr. Florestan's dark eyes, bewildered amazement, almost; and the quick, tender look of sympathy he gave little Ida as she glanced timidly up, then away with wine-lidded cheeks.

But he raised his hat very gallantly to the whole party.

A pleasant prophecy to you—and a sure fulfillment.

"What a curious-looking place it is, isn't it? Come on, Leila, you needn't be afraid! There's no one here."

Guilio Clyn was pushing into the Gipsy's hut in her customary go-ahead style, while the other girls were content to follow at leisure.

"Such a place I never did see! Mercy! look at the skulls and—ugh!—I verily believe there's a whole skeleton hanging up! If it's not enough to freeze the blood to see it! Well, I suppose we all have to come to that, some day!"

With which comforting assurance she began poking about the gloomy, dingy room.

"Here are cards—dirty and mighty suspicious of cigar smoke—in fact, the whole place smells kind of mummy."

"The idea!" and Ida Searle's delicious little laugh rang out.

"As if the old witch uses any thing better than tobacco and a pipe! Cigar, indeed! Guilio, you are in love with some one that smokes."

The other girls laughed at the well-known hint to Guilio, but Leila turned sharply around at her.

"Will you be so good as to speak when you are spoken to? If you'd remember you are my companion, hired and paid, you'd not be so likely to consider yourself an equal."

The tears sprang to Ida's violet eyes.

"Leila!" she exclaimed, indignantly, "you know I am as much Uncle Grey's niece as you are—"

"Are you? Then perhaps you can inform me which one of Mr. Grey's nieces it is who is fishing so plainly for a certain gentleman! Ida Searle, I am ashamed of you."

"Come—come!" interposed Nettie Warren, "don't torment little Ida again—you are awful

cross, Leila. Let's go sit down until the old hag returns— isn't that she yonder?"

Near them, coming down the forest path, was a tall, ungainly creature, whose heavy man's boots were revealed by the short skimpy skirts.

A faded shawl was pinned most awkwardly around the square shoulders, and an old hood was drawn over the head.

A dark skin, yellow-stained teeth, and a basket of blossoms completed the description.

Somewhat awe-stricken, the girls awaited her approach in silence; then suddenly, as if possessed of some impulse, Leila Lynington darted from her seat on the mossy tree-trunk, and ran forward to meet the woman.

"See—stop a moment while I tell you what I will pray you to do. The little white-faced chit yonder, with the cherry-colored shawl over her shoulders—you must prophesy her a dark fortune, the gloomier the better. Do you mind? And for me—remember to describe a tall, royal man with dark eyes, a fair skin, and brown hair—a rich, elegant husband."

Then taking breath after the disjointed sentences, Leila pressed a five-dollar bill in the witch's hand, and swept haughtily back.

"That's not fair!" cried Guilio. "How are we to know you have not bribed her?"

"Because I say I have not," unblushingly replied Leila; and just then the fortune-teller set down her basket and approached the party.

"What is it you want?"

It was a rough voice, and Ida shivered.

"What should we want, sure enough? Ain't it your business to tell fortunes?"

The fortune-teller turned her eyes slowly toward Guilio.

"Cross my palm with silver and I will read the stars for you. It is for you, bright-eyed maiden," she went on, as the girls dropped the previously-provided scarce silver coins in her grimy hand. "It is written against you to marry early, be widowed early, and all with a cloud on your heart never to be uplifted till the second lover comes with bonny blue eyes to smile it away."

She abruptly dropped Guilio's hand and turned to Ida Searle.

"No, no!" cried Ida; "I dare not let you! I think it is wrong—"

"You fool!" muttered Leila, fiercely. "Let her tell it, now we are here. Perhaps she will promise Mr. Florestan to you."

Her tones were full of taunting scorn.

"Mr. Florestan?" returned Guilio, merrily to Leila. "Why, he is in love with you—or vice versa. Which is it, Queen Leila?"

Miss Lynington's lips curled with a self-satisfied smile, and she held out her hand to the Gipsy.

"Perhaps Guilio can inform you on that disputed point—can you?"

The fortune-teller peered at the soft pink palm; then went over to Ida, whose eyes were full of cruel teasing; then she shook her head.

"I see clouds, black and rose-colored; I see treachery and tender-heartedness; I see happiness and discontent; it lies between you two—you two."

Then she turned abruptly away, and the girls, with a burst of surprised exclamations, retraced their steps.

Flushed, weary, and yet passing fair, Leila Lynington sat among the honeysuckle vines that clung around the hotel porch; Ida nestled on the grass at the foot of the flight, her white robes gleaming in the duskiness.

Alvan Florestan, carelessly smoking, came up the village street from the depot, and Leila's cheeks flushed as she saw him coming, for, with all her faults she loved him so.

"The night is so splendid, Alvan."

Her low, thrilling tones did not seem to discompose him in the least; and, despite that confidentially, friendly "Alvan," that she seldom ventured on, he very coolly knocked the column of ashes from his cigar.

"Yes, very fine," he remarked, a second later. "Isn't that Ida on the grass by the cleander?"

"I guess so. We missed you so much. I wished a dozen times you had gone."

"Yes? Well, I had pretty serious business to transact, and I feel gratified at the result. I collected a bill I never dreamed of."

Somehow it stirred Leila's heart to have him speak to her of his private affairs; and how statily his head was, leaning against the white pillar.

"I am glad you were successful; I am always pleased to hear of the good fortune of any one I—of a friend."

She made that little mistake very charmingly, and lifted her eyes to his.

"That reminds me," he said, after another pause. "I think you can tell me where this came from. I assure you I shall keep it as a memento of this lucky day."

He drew a five-dollar bill from his vest pocket. Leila stared.

"What?" she said, at length.

Then he drew his cigar away, and descending a step lower, stood just in front of Leila.

"Miss Lynington, my little ruse in borrowing the fortune-teller's house and apparel, to-day, from a freak of pure mischief, has resulted very strangely—very solemnly, and yet very delightfully. I need not explain; suffice it that I shall ever retain your generous fee to remind me why I never became nearer or dearer to you. Now, I am going down there, under the cleander, to ask Ida Searle to be my wife."

And so Ida's fortune was a true one—the rose-colored clouds, and the life of happiness—for as Mrs. Alvan Florestan, her days passed in one long, sweet devotion.

The Man from Texas:
OR,
THE OUTLAWS OF ARKANSAS.

A STORY OF THE ARKANSAS BORDER.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "HAD DETECTIVE," "ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOY," "WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED HAREPTA," "ACE OF SPADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK."

CHAPTER XXIV.

"LIFTING THE TRAIL."

"By golly! is that you, Massa Texas?" Sam exclaimed, as he opened the door, and the light streaming out revealed the face and form of the overseer.

"Yes; come out; I want to speak to you."

"Yes, sar," and Sam advanced a step or two. "Close the door; I want you to walk up the road a piece."

"Yes, sar," responded the negro, promptly; then he closed the door and followed the overseer.

"Hadin't you better go and get a hat?" Texas asked, noticing that the black was uncovered.

"Is you gwine far?"

"Oh, no, only up to the gate; I want to have a little talk with you about the hands," the overseer answered.

"All right, den; s'pect I won't catch de r'umatis; dis yer child tough," Sam said, confidently.

The two walked slowly past the house and

down the shady avenue, bordered by magnolia trees, which led to the main road.

"Quite a number of the hands are in the stable now, I suppose?" Texas asked.

"Yes, sar; de boys heered jes' a bit 'bout dat yer trial an' how de ole Judge fotched dem, an' dey come up for to git me to 'splain de matter to dere obfuscated interlums," Sam explained, with a great deal of dignity visible in his manner.

"What do they think about the affair?"

"By golly, dey say dat de ole Judge is mad for sure, an' dat young Bob Howard ain't much better, fur he's generally dat full of whisky dat it wouldn't do fur to hold a lighted match near his mouf, kase he'd 'splode, sure's yer born."

"But what do they think of the way I handled King Congo?"

"Now, Massa Texas, I jes' tell yer w'at it is!" Sam exclaimed, emphatically. "dar ain't a nig on dis yer plantation dat would dar' to wink crossways at ye now. Dat Congo's jes' de worst man you eber seed. He's jes' bin walkin' right ober de darkies 'round heah eber since he come."

"You think, then, that we will not have any trouble with the hands?" Texas asked, thoughtfully.

"Not a mite, Massa Texas!" Sam exclaimed, in a very decided manner; "dey's all willin' to work, ef dem bad niggers will only keep away an' luff 'em alone. Dey's got to live jes' like a white man, an', ef dey don't work, whar is dey gwine to git dar victulums, an' dat's w'at de matter wid Hannah?"

"The hands generally are perfectly willing to work, I suppose, if such fellows as this Congo leave them alone?"

"By golly, Massa Texas, you kin jes' bet all de n' on back of your head on dat!" Sam replied, emphatically. "It's jes' such mean brack niggers as dis yer Congo dat makes all de fuss. I 'clar to goodness, I done t'ink you smash him ribs in when you hit dat belly-whopper dat time. By golly! he looked as ef he had bin sent fur an' couldn't come!"

The overseer laughed at the expression.

"Who were those fellows that Congo had along with him?"

"Dem darkies dat lie so in de court?"

"Yes."

"Don't wan' fur to say nuffin ag'in nobody?" Sam said, cautiously, "but, ef I was a chicken an' saw dem nigs comin' in de night, I jes' 'root mighty high."

"Don't work much, I suppose?"

"De hardest work dey eber do is huntin' 'coons in de swamp," Sam replied, disdainfully. "Dem's poor trash; ain't fit fur nuffin but to drink whisky, an' sleep in de sun wid dere moufs open fur to ketch flies."

"Yes, but this old fellow that they call Uncle Snow, is he one of that class, too?" Texas asked, carelessly.

"Oh, no, sar; he's a gemmen, he is. He's jes' one of de best ole niggers dat dere is in dis yer country. Why, he was raised on dis yer place wid de General."

"He was?"

"Yes, sar; 'fore de war he was de General's own man, but when de General was off wid de sodjers, arter de Linkum Yankees come, de ole Uncle started a store fur to sell to de sodjers; you see, dere was 'bout a hundred Yankees down to de landing."

"And did the old man make out pretty well?" Texas asked, in a careless sort of way.

"Yes, sar; he done first-rate, an' he's got a mighty nice little store now in his ole shanty; he does a heap of business dere."

"Where is the old man's store?"

Texas asked the question more with the air of a man who was merely talking because he had nothing better to do than from any real interest in the subject.

"You knows whar de Judge's place is; an' ef you noticed dat jes' afore you get to de first house de odder side of de Judge's place dat dere is a small road turns off to de right."

"Yes, sar; he done first-rate," the overseer said, thoughtfully; "there's a small white-washed shanty on the left, facing the road, isn't there?"

"Yes, sar," Sam replied, promptly. "Well, when you get to dat road you turn off to de right han', as ef you was agwine to Fort Smith, an' de first house you come to is ole Uncle Snow's."

Then the overseer turned abruptly round and commenced to walk back to the house; Sam followed his example.

"You think that there will be no trouble with the hands?" Texas said, returning to the former subject again.

"No, sar; sure as yer born!" replied the negro, decidedly. "dere won't any more mean brack trash come foelin' 'round yer plantation arter de way you walloped Congo; but jes' you look out, Massa Texas, dat dat mean nig don't hide in a fence-corner wid a shot-gun fur yer some time; he'd jes' as soon shoot a man as eat a roasted 'possum."

"I'll keep my eyes open for him," Texas replied, in his cool, careless way. "If he ever levels a weapon at me, I'll give him a chance to get measured for a coffin before he can pull the trigger."

"Hi-yah!" chuckled Sam; "I'd walk ten mil's fur to see dat nigger planted, 'deed I would!"

The two walked on in silence until they reached the house.

With his foot on the steps, Texas spoke: "We'll take field bright and early to-morrow; we must make up for the time lost to-day."

"Yes, sar; de nigs are willin' fur to do all dey kin ef dey ain't sturbed by scallywagums like dat Congo," Sam replied, as he departed for the stable.

The overseer proceeded up-stairs directly to his room, drew a match on the sole of his boot and lit a candle, which stood upon the mantel-piece.

The face of the overseer was dark and gloomy, and there was a restless, fitful light in his eyes.

He opened the top drawer of the little bureau, which stood between the two windows, and from the drawer took the leather belt which swung the two holsters into which the revolvers were thrust.

Texas drew the revolvers from the holsters, and by the light of the candle, inspected the charges. Fully satisfied that they were in perfect order, he returned them to their places and buckled the belt around his waist. Then from the drawer he took the keen-edged bowie-knife and thrust it through the belt. And after this was done, he extinguished the candle, and quietly closing the door behind him, stole with noiseless steps down the stairs.

With equal caution he opened the front door of the house and closed it behind him, after he had passed through the portal.

The sounds of laughter and of merriment still came from the negroes in the stable.

Texas hesitated and listened for a moment; then descending the steps, he walked cautiously down the avenue toward the road.

He fancied that he was unobserved, but his thought was wrong, for Missouri, sitting by one of the windows of her bed-chamber, which overlooked the approach to the house, detected the figure of the overseer skulking, like a thief in the night, into the dense shadows cast by the magnolia trees.

CHAPTER XXV.

OLE UNCLE SNOW.

WITH cautious steps the overseer proceeded until he came to the main road; then he cast a single glance back at the house as if to reassure himself that his departure had not been noticed by any one. Feeling fully satisfied that he was unobserved, he proceeded with rapid steps down the road toward Smithville.

It was one of the balmy spring nights so common to Arkansas. The dark-blue sky above was studded with a countless myriad of twinkling stars—spangled over with the jewels of the night. The moon had not yet risen, but afar off on the line of the eastern horizon appeared the faint glow of light which heralded the coming of the bride of darkness. The insects of the night piped their shrill tones from earth, grass, bush and tree, and all the air was filled with a sweet, subtle perfume coming from the opening spring blossoms.

But the overseer heeded not the glorious sky above, the notes of the night insects, nor the sweet incense of Nature's children. Once he had paused and cast a glance up at the be-diamonded heavens above, not to look and wonder at the flashing lamps of the firmament, but to note how soon the moon would rise, and then again he had halted for a second in his rapid onward stride when the distant howls of the watch-dogs broke upon the stillness of the night, as cur answered cur in fierce and vaporous yowl.

Onward with vigorous strides he went, the fierce passion of the chase swelling in his heart, and what scent so hot in our nostrils as when we track the human quarry?

Judge Yell's place he passed and came to where the narrow road turned off to the right.

Twenty paces up the road, heading to the west, and the overseer paused in front of a small two-story shanty, the whitewashed walls of which glared out on the gloom of the night.

Through the cracks of the door and the tightly-shuttered windows came the flickering rays of a light, showing that the inmates of the shanty had not yet retired to rest.

The overseer stepped up to the door and knocked.

There was a moment of silence, then came the sound of some one moving within the shanty, and then the door opened, and the overseer entered. The overseer stepped up to the door and knocked.

"Who's dar?" questioned a voice from within, and from the voice the overseer recognized at once that it was the old uncle in person who spoke.

"Mr. Texas, General Smith's overseer."

"An' does you want fur to see me?" the old negro asked.

"Yes, I've got some very important business with you, ole uncle."

"Is you all alone?"

"Yes," Texas replied, wondering at the old man's caution.

Then he heard the noise made by the negro in removing the stout bar which fastened the door, and after that the door opened and the old, white-headed darky peered out cautiously.

"Fore de Lord, dat is you for sure, Massa Texas!" the old negro exclaimed, throwing open the door widely so that the overseer could enter; an invitation which he immediately proceeded to accept.

The interior of the shanty consisted of one room only. On the right hand was a small counter, and around the sides of the room were shelves filled with a miscellaneous stock of groceries and dry-goods.

A tall candle burned on the counter, and near by was a cane-seat arm-chair which the old negro evidently had been occupying when he had been aroused by the knock at the door.

At one end of the room was a ladder which led to the second story.

"Did you have any doubt as to whether it was me or not?" the overseer asked, as the old man closed the door again and proceeded to put up the bar.

"Yes, sar," the old uncle answered, promptly; "dere's a heap of mean white folks—an' brack trash too fur dat matter—a prowlin' round arter dark. You can't be too keeful, Massa Texas. Dey t'ink dat de ole man's got a little money 'kase I keeps dis yer store, an' I done t'ink dat dey will trouble me sometime. I t'ought I knew yer voice, but I wasn't gwine to left no in afore I know'd fur sure."

"Is there anybody besides ourselves in the house?" Texas asked, glancing around, and his eyes resting upon the rude ladder leading to the upper story.

"Yes, sar; dere's my gran'son up dar," the old negro replied. "I s'pect he's sound asleep dough; dat chile kin sleep like a yaller dog in de sun."

"You had better find out if he is asleep, for I have something very particular to say to you, and I don't wish any one to hear it besides ourselves." Texas spoke with evident earnestness.

The old negro looked astonished. He couldn't imagine what could be the nature of the communication.

"I done see, sar," he replied. "Ephraim, you Ephraim!" he called, going to the foot of the ladder; but there was no answer from the occupant of the room above. "I done t'ink he's sound as a 'coon in a hollow tree, Massa Texas," the old negro said, in a tone of conviction. "I'll jes' take a look up dar an' see dough, fur sure."

The old man climbed up the ladder, and as his head emerged through a hole in the floor above, the heavy breathing of the young negro, who was stretched out, wrapped in a buffalo robe, in the further corner of the upper room, convinced him that the boy was sound asleep.

The negro descended the ladder again.

"Is he asleep?" Texas asked.

"Jes' like a log, sar; 'fore de Lord, he isn't gwine to done wake out of dat sleep afore de mornin'," the old negro answered.

"Then he will not be like to overhear our conversation?"

"No, sar."

"Sit down, uncle, for I reckon we've got quite a talk before us," Texas said, helping himself to the arm-chair by the counter while the old negro sat down on a keg near by, an expression of wonder on his face.

"Now, uncle, we want to go a good ways back—way back to the first of the war," Texas began.

"Yes, sar; but dis yer ole nigger is jes' stumped as to w'at you's gwine to say," the aged black remarked, in wonder.

"You will understand pretty soon; but, in the first place, before I commence, I want you to promise to keep what I am going to say a profound secret. You mustn't say a word about the matter to any one. Will you promise that?"

The old darky thought the matter over for a few minutes in silence.

"See hyer, Massa Texas," he said, at length, "you isn't gwine to git me inter any trouble, is you?"

"Oh, no; no fear of that."

"Well, then, as long as you isn't gwine to ax me fur to hurt nobody or nuffin I'll 'greed fur to keep my mouf shut."

"That is all I ask," the overseer rejoined;

then he remained silent for a few minutes, evidently deliberating how to begin, while the old negro watched him with an expression of wonder visible on his wrink

"No, sar, an' I don't 'spect dat it would hurt him a mite ef he wasn't," the old dorky said, sagely. "But you see, sar, your comin' in in dis yere promise way an' 'quirin' 'bout dat yaller boy has so kinder obfuscated me dat I 'clare to man I 'se completely conglomerated."

"Go ahead and tell me what you know about the boy, and then I'll explain to you why I inquired and the means by which I have been constituted heir to the package that Jupiter left in this town."

"Yes, sar," the negro said, absently; his mind was evidently in a fog. The easy assurance of the overseer perplexed him.

"You first met Jupe in sixty-three, I believe?"

"Yes, sar, it was when dat yere Texas regiment was lyer. I had jes' got permission from de General fur to open dis yere store. I kin remember jes' as well as kin be, it was de very night dat dat Texas regiment left de landing fur to go an' fight dat Yankee General Steele, dat was advancin' fur to gobble up Little Rock, an' 'fore de Lord, he did, too, in spite of 'em. Well, sar, dat very night I was a-comin' on de Mulberry crick road—you see, I'd been back in de country, fur to buy some eggs an' chickens an' a lot of odder truck; an' dere was a bright moon dat night, an' jes' as I come along de road, 'bout three miles out, where de swash from Black Jack Swamp run clos' up to de road, I heered de awfulest groans dat I ebber did heer. At fust I was de most scared nigger dat ebber was seen, but den I liston jes' a little, an' I foun' out dat de noise came from a little ole cabin back from de road, right by de swamp; an' den, putty soon, I see'd dat it wasn't n' 'ting bad, only some poor critter dat was hurt mighty awful. So I went ober to de cabin, an' dere I foun' Jupiter a lyin' flat on his back wid de wust fever dat you ebber did see. I fixed him up as well as I could, an' he tole me all about himself. He was de servant of one of dem Texas ossifers, an' he had bin beat jes' as ef he had bin a dog, an' he'd run away, knowin' dat de regiment was gwine to move afore long, an' dat dey wouldn't be able fur to hunt for him much. He had bin lyin' in de swamp fur two nights an' de fever got hold of him. You see, he was one of dem niggers from near de Mexikin line, whar dey don't have much fever. He hadn't suffer much till arter sundown, an' den de ole fever jes' laid him right out. I s'pect he would have bin a dead nigger 'fore long ef I hadn't come along jes' den, like de good Samaritan dat you read about in de Scriptures. I happen to have a little whisky dat pine burrs had bin steeped in, de best 'ting in de world fur to break de fever, an' an' wid dat I fotech him along. Arter he got well, an' de Yankee gobbled up Little Rock, he went down dere an' I nebber see'd any thin' more of him."

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 181.)

The Specter Barque.

A TALE OF THE PACIFIC.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID.

AUTHOR OF "TRACKED TO DEATH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LXIX.

A DUEL TO THE DEATH.

"LET THE FIGHT BE A FAIR ONE!"

So demand several voices as the pirate crew comes clustering around the intending combatants.

"Look here, shipmates!" continues Striker, still standing between the two angry men, and alternately crying them. "What's the use o' spillin' blood about it, may be killin' one the other? All for the sake o' a pair o' petticoats, or a kuppel o' pairs cyther. Take my advice, an' settle the thing in a pacifical way. Maybe ye will, after ye've heerd what I intend proposin', which, I dar' say, 'll be satisfactory to all."

"What is it, Jack?" asks one of the outsiders.

"First, then, I'm a-goin' to make the observation that fightin' ain't the way to get them weemen, whoever may be fools enough to fight for 'em. There's somethin' to be did besides."

"Explain yourself, old Sydney; what's to be done besides?"

"The girls has got to be paid for as well as fit for."

"How?"

"How! What humbuggin' nonsense to ask! Hain't we all equal shares in 'em? Coarse we have. Therefore them as wants 'em bad, won't object to payin' 'em. There appear to be four candidates in the field, and enuf for each of 'em. Now, 'thout referrin' to any fightin' that's to be done, I say that cyther as eventually gits a gal, shed pay a considerashun o' gold-dust all round to the rest o' us—say a pannikin apiece. That's what Jack Striker first proposes."

"It's fair," says one.

"Nothing more than our rights," asserts a second.

"I agree to it," says Harry Blew.

"I too," adds Davis.

Gomez gives assent by a disdainful nod, Hernandez making the action. In fear of losing adherents, neither dare refuse.

"What more have you to say?" asks one, recalling Striker to his promise of further proposals.

"Not much, only I think it be a pity, after our bein' so long in harmony together, we can't part same way. Weemen's allers been a bother ever since I've knowed 'em; an' I s'pose they'll continue so to the end o' the chapter, an' the end o' some lives here. I repeat, that it be a pity we shed have to wind up w' a quarrel, when blood's bound to be spilt. Now, why can't it be settled without that? I think I know of a way."

"What way?"

"Leave it to the women themselves; g'e them the choice o' who they'd like to go along w'; same time lettin' 'em understand they've got to choose one or t'other. Let 'em take their pick, an' after, there's to be no more disputin'."

That's the law in the Austraylin bush, when we've a case o' this kind, and every bush-ranger has to abide by it. Why shouldn't it be the same here?"

"Why shouldn't it? It's a good law—just and fair for all."

"I consent to it," says Harry Blew, drawing back, as if not sure of the result, but willing to submit to what may be the wish of the majority.

"I may not be so young or good-lookin' as Mr. Gomez," he adds. "I know I ain't, cyther. Still, I'll take my chance. If she I love and lay claim to, pronounces against me, I promise to stand aside, and say ne'er another word, much less care to fight for her. She may go w' Gomez, an' take my blessin' for both."

"Bravo, Blew! You talk like an honest man. Don't be afraid; we'll stand by you."

Several say this.

"Comrades!" says Davis, "I place myself in your hands. If my girl goes against me, I'm willing to give her up, same as Blew."

What about Gomez and Hernandez? What answer will they make to the proposed peaceful compromise? All eyes are turned on them, every one awaiting it.

Gomez gives it, his eyes flashing fire as he speaks. Hitherto he has been holding his anger in restraint. Now it breaks out, poured forth like lava from a burning mountain.

"Carajo!" he cries. "I've been listening a long time to talk—taking it too coolly. Cursed idle talk, all of it; yours, Mr. Striker, especially. What care we about your ways in the Australian bush? They won't hold good with me. My style of settling disputes is this, or this."

He touches his pistol butt, and the hilt of the machete hanging against his hip.

"Mr. Blew may have his choice."

"All right!" retorts Blew. "I'm good for a bout w' cyther, and don't care a toss which. Pistols at six paces, or my cutlass against that thing of yours. Both if you like."

"Both be it. That's best; and we'll make the end sure. Get ready, and quick, for I intend killing you."

Say you intend trying, I'm ready, now. You may begin soon's you feel disposed."

"And I'm ready for you, sir," says Davis, confronting Hernandez. "Knives, pistol, tomahawks, any thing you please."

Hernandez hangs back, as though he would rather decline the proposed combat a l'outrance.

"No, Bill," exclaims Striker, interfering. "One fight at a time. When Blew and Gomez he's got through, then you can g'e the other his change, if so be he wants to hev it."

Hernandez appears gratified with the speech, disregarding the innuendo. He had no thought it would come to this, and looks as if he would surrender up his sweetheart without striking a blow. He makes no rejoinder, but shrinks back like a craven.

"Yes; one fight at a time!" urge the others, indorsing the dictum of Striker.

It is the demand of the majority, and the minority concedes it.

All know it is to be a duel to the death. A glance at the antagonists, at their angry eyes and determined attitudes, makes this sure. On that lone sea beach, one of the two will soon sleep his last sleep; it may be both.

The preliminaries are speedily arranged. Under the circumstances, and between such adversaries, there are but few pincushions of ceremony to be satisfied; only the rough code of honor common among robbers of all climes.

No seconds are chosen or spoken of. All on the ground are to act as such, and at once proceed to business.

Some mark and measure the distance, stepping it between two stones. Others examine the pistols, see that both are loaded with ball-cartridge, and carefully capped.

The fight is to be with Colt's six-shooters, navy size. Each combatant chances to have one of this pattern. They are to commence firing at twelve paces apart, and fire away, closing quick as either chooses. If neither fall to the shots, then to finish up with the steel.

The captives inside the cave are ignorant of what is going on. Little dream they of the red tragedy soon to be enacted near, or how much they may be affected by its result. It is, indeed, to them the chance of a contrasting destiny.

The combatants have taken stand by the stones, placed twelve paces apart. Blew, having stripped off his pilot-cloth coat, is in his shirt-sleeves. Hernandez, rolled up to the elbow show ranges of tattooing, red and blue, ships, anchors, stars, crosses, crescents and sweethearts, a perfect palimpsest of pictorial record. They show also muscley lying along the arm like semit cords upon a statue. Should the shots fall, that arm promises well for wielding the cutlass; and if those fingers clutch his antagonist's throat, the struggle will be a short one.

No weak adversary will he meet in Gil Gomez. He, too, has thrown aside his outer garments, the scarlet cloak and heavy hat, hitherto shading his features. He does not need stripping to the shirt-sleeves; the light jupeta of velvet in no way incumbers him. Fitting like a glove, it displays arms of no ordinary strength, with a body in symmetrical correspondence.

A duel between two such gladiators—and to the death—should be a spectacle worth witnessing. It might be painful; for all that, fearful interesting.

Those about to witness it seem to think so, as all stand silent, with breath bated, and eyes bent alternately on the two antagonists.

It has been already arranged that Striker is to give the signal, and the ex-convict, standing centrally outside the line of fire, is about to say a word that will set two men, mad as tigers, at one another—each with full determination to blaze away, cut down, and kill.

There is a moment of intense stillness, like the lull which precedes a storm. Nothing heard save the tidal wash against the adjacent strand and the boom of the distant breakers, at intervals intermingled with the shrill scream of a sea-bird.

The cautionary "ready" is forming on Striker's lips, to be followed by the "Fire!—one—two—three."

Not one of these words, not a syllable of them, is he permitted to speak. Before he can give utterance to the "ready," a cry comes down from the cliff, which arrests the attention of all.

It is La Crosse who sends it, speaking in an accent of alarm.

"*Mon Dieu!*" he exclaims. "*Mon Dieu!*"

Then follows the explanatory phrase:

"We're upon an island!"

CHAPTER LXX.

RETRIBUTION.

WHEN the forest is on fire, or the savanna swept by flood, and the wild denizens flee to a spot uninvaded, the timid deer is safe beside the fierce wolf and treacherous cougar. In face of the common danger they will stand tremblingly together; the beasts of prey for the time gentle as their victims.

So with human kind; a parallel being furnished by what occurs to the pirate crew of the Condor and their captives.

The former on hearing the cry of La Crosse are at first only surprised. Soon this changes to apprehension, keen enough to stay the threatening fight, even indefinitely to postpone it. For at the words "we're upon an island" all are struck with an instinctive sense of danger; and all, combatants as well as spectators, rush up the cliff, and on to the summit of a hill La Crosse has already climbed.

Arrived there, and casting their eyes around, they have evidence of the truth of his assertion. They are upon an island—a strait, many miles across, separating them from the main land. A strait too wide to be traversed by the strongest swimmer among them—too wide for them to be descried from the opposite shore, even through a telescope.

And the island is a mere strip of sea-washed rock, running parallel to the coast, cliff-bound, table-topped, sterile, treeless.

And to all appearance waterless!

As this last thought takes shape in their minds, at the same time remembering they have no boat, what was at first only a flurry of excited apprehension, settles into fixed, steadfast fear.

It becomes cold terror when, after scattering over the islet, and exploring it from end to

end, they again come together and each party delivers its report.

No wood save some stunted mezzquites; no water, stream, pond or spring; only that of the salt sea, laving its shingly strand. No sign of animal life, except snakes, scorpions and lizards, with the birds flying above screaming, as if in triumph at the intruders being entrapped.

For they are entrapped, and clearly comprehend it. Most of them are men who have professionally followed the sea, and understand what it is to be a castaway. Some have had experience of this, and need no reminding of its privations and danger.

After again gazing across the broad belt of water between them and the main shore—an expanse that precludes all thought of swimming—after giving another glance at the sterile islet, at the same time recalling the circumstances of their bilged boat, to a man they feel their safety compromised, as if the spot of insulated earth under their feet instead of being but three leagues from land were three thousand; for that matter, in the middle of the Pacific.

One and all now realize the extent of the danger they have brought upon themselves. What madness to have abandoned the barque! What would they not give to be again in her, she still sailing! Most of them believe that she has gone to the bottom of the sea, and now reflect that their cruelty to those on board has come back upon them as a curse!

The interrupted duel—what of it? Nothing. Or, if any thing, only thought of as a forcing of the past. Between the *ci-devant* combatants mad anger and jealous rivalry may still remain. But neither shows it now; both are subdued in contemplation of their common peril. Blew apparently less than his antagonist.

Still all seem sufficiently frightened—awed by a combination of occurrences that look like Heaven's hand stretched out to chastise them for their sins.

In their midst Carmen Montijo and Inez Alvarez are now as safe as if walking the streets of Cadiz, or flirting their fans at a fancee de scene and difficult to any likelihood of being molested by the ruffians around them; safe as the lamb beside the millennial lion.

But alas! exposed to the danger threatening all—to death from hunger, thirst, starvation.

Of this, at first, there is only a vague fear. Surely some means will be discovered to escape from the island? Or remaining on it, some way to sustain life?

Hopes, that as the days pass, turn out illusions. Not a stick of timber out of which to construct a raft, nothing for food, save reptiles on the land, and shell-fish in the sea; these scarce and difficult to be collected. Now and then a bird, its flesh ill-flavored smelling rank, and the same tasting. But the want above all—water! For days not a drop till their throats feel as if on fire.

Plenty of water around. Too much of it rippling up to their feet—only tantalizing them. The briny deep—they may touch, but dare not taste. It makes them mad to look upon it. To drink it will but madden them the more. Knowing this they refrain.

A fearful fate threatens the crew of the abandoned barque; in horror equaling that to which they believe they have consigned those left aboard her.

It might be deemed a just retribution—a punishment apportioned to their crime—but for their innocent captives, who are destined to suffer the same.

Presuming this to be the result, one can not feel, with the pirates, that God's hand is upon them, or that His arm has yet been extended over that desert isle. If it were, He would not suffer the innocent to go down with the guilty.

Let us hope, let us pray, that he will not.

CHAPTER LXXI.

SIX DAYS OF AGONY.

"VIRGIN! Santissima Virgin! Mother of God, have mercy!"

The prayerful apostrophe is heard in the cabin of the Condor. It is Don Gregorio Montijo who utters it.

Six days have elapsed since the desertion of the crew; and the vessel is still afloat, sailing with full canvas set as on the night when the pirates forsook her.

During all this time has her captain been seated at table *à-la-vie* with his passenger. Upright in their chairs, without change of attitude, or none worth noting. Without having tasted food or drink, in spite of the repast spread before them. Confections; fruits so near that the perfume fills their nostrils; the bouquet of best wines escaping from uncorked bottles, and decanters with the stoppers out.

Little care they for the quality of these. The craving hunger and burning thirst from which they now suffer would make welcome the stales, scum-biscuit, and the worst water ever contained in a ship's cask.

Food and drink before their eyes, but beyond reach of their hands and lips as much as if miles away! It but aggravates their suffering; and they experience all the agony that tortured Tantalus.

For six long days have they endured it, and as many nights. It has made fearful inroad on their strength, their frames. Both are reduced almost to the condition of skeletons; cheekbones protruding, eyes sunk deep in the sockets.

Were the cords which confine them cut away, they would sink feebly on the floor. The lashing alone keeps them erect.

Impossible to paint the agony of those dread six days—the pangs of hunger, the terrible torture of thirst, and along with both the constant and dread certainty of death—lingering death. To Don Gregorio more, far more. Plundered of his property, bereft of his children, at once robbed and ruined! All this in retrospect, with the fear keener anguish, as he reflects on the present, and the future. Where are his dear ones? What has been done to them? What is to be their fate? Is it still hanging over them? or have they been found?

In any case so to be scarce dares to dwell on it. He dreads the undoing of his reason.

The two starving men have not all the while been silent. At times they have conversed upon the circumstances of their desperate situation, reviewing the events that led to it. Not much of the latter; since the cause seems clear. Cupidity, tempted by gold, sufficiently accounts for the robbery of the ship and her desertion. The abduction has been a circumstance accidental to the scheme. The pirates carrying off the booty were not likely to leave such beauty behind.

All these points have come up in converse, and been so decided on.

Other topics have occupied them. The treachery of Harry Blew; him so much confided in; with the singular fact of the whole crew having taken part in the hellish deed. Not one man honest—none faithful!

They have not dwelt much on this; nor ought else connected with motives or causes. They have been too much absorbed by the effect, taking counsel as to their chance of escape.

And this only in the earlier days, and indeed only the earlier hours. Ere a day and night had elapsed, they knew there was no hope, and gave up speaking, almost thinking of it.

During the first day they had exerted their

voices, at intervals calling aloud; to hear responses in a similar strain—the cries of the cook in his caboose. As he came out, they could but conclude that he, like themselves, was confined, fast bound beyond the power of releasing himself.

Then, long spells of silence—mute, motionless despair, with heads drooped, and chins touching their breasts.

Now and then Don Gregorio raising his eyes to look out upon the sea visible to him, as he sat facing the cabin windows. Sometimes gazing for an hour upon the blue expanse and the white froth cast up by the barque's keel, stringing far astern. Seeing now and then the spout of a *cachalot*, a "school" of bounding porpoises, or the flapping wings of a bird.

Once seeing what caused him to start, cry out, and writhe in his ropes. A ship in full sail crossing the barque's wake, scarce a cable's length astern!

Hearing also a hail, to which he and Lautanas responded in their strongest voice, far too feeble. Repeating their responses for nearly an hour afterward, till hope again forsook them, and they sink back to their habitual despair. Nothing after, save the gibbering of the outriggers, that they know to be loose, scampering over the deck, at times coming down the cabin stair, and dashing their uncouth form against the door.

It is the morning of the seventh day, and Don Gregorio has lost all hope of help from land. It has long since left Lautanas, who sits without speaking a word, his eyes closed, his head lolled back, supported by the top rail of the chair. But for the occasional twitching of his features one might believe him dead, so pale his cheeks, so white his lips, so wan and wasted every way!

But if Don Gregorio has lost hope of help from man, he still has faith in GOD—in heaven. Hence his appeal to the Virgin in the terms recorded. It is not the first time he has made it—not by scores; and again, as if mechanically, but with unabated fervor, he repeats it.

"Virgin! Holy Virgin! come to our aid! Mother of God, have mercy!"

All at once, as if startled from a dream, Lautanas raises his head, crying out:

"Virgin! there is no Virgin, no Mother of God, no God either! no mercy!"

"Don't speak in that way," remonstrates the Spaniard, his Christian sense shocked at the other's profanity. Then reproachfully looking across the table, he continues: "You know, dear Antonio, there is a God, and a God's mother—the Holy Mary, who has mercy."

"Where is she?" interrupts the Chilean.

"Where is this Mother of God? Where her mercy? I'm hungry and want to eat, why don't she provide me with food? I'm thirsty and want drink, why don't she give it? Ah! yes; there it is; both food and drink; plenty of plates and dishes, plenty of jugs and bottles, all full, all beautiful! What of that? And what of your merciful Mary? If she had a spark of it she'd not let these devils hold my hands and hinder me from getting at the good things. There's a legion of the devils, surely this good Virgin can command them? Why don't she do it, and cast them out? She has plenty of angels—why don't she order them to do it? Then we might eat, drink and be merry—now we can't—I can't. They've got hold of my hands, their claws clutching my throat. Ah! they are choking me. Take them off!"

"Don Antonio!"

"Take them off—off—off! Tell your Virgin, your good Virgin, to make her angels release me."

"Don Antonio!"

"No, they won't, nor she won't; the Mother of God won't; nor God himself."

"Dear Captain Lautanas!"

"Ha—ha—ha! Look at those devils! see how they glance and sparkle! You call them decanters? They're not that; they're demons, demigods! And those black fellows! Bottles indeed! They are imp—ugly imps! Merry for all that! Ha—ha—ha! How they laugh—how they dance! and without music! Where's my old cook? He can play both fiddle and banjo. Come, old Zanzibar! bring your instruments along! And where are my pets—the wild men of Borneo? They can dance too, kick up their heels like Persipheer himself. Come down from the deck, you red-haired Bayaderes! Come and show us a step to beat all these devils and demigods. They'll do it. They'll do it; ha—ha—ha!"

"Oh, God!" groans Don Gregorio, "Lautanas has lost his reason!"

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 172.)

Jack Winthrop's Boast.

BY MARK WILTON.

"In all my long years' experience on the south-west border," Jeb Washburn said, "I have never met with another man just like Jack Winthrop. I first encountered him during the Mexican war, when he, a life-long hunter and free-trapper, came into Taylor's army, and joined the company of which I was a member."

"Our company was composed entirely of those dauntless Texan rangers, whose names have become famous; but in all the organization there was not one like Jack Winthrop. We had been born and brought up on the wide-spreading Texan prairie; had met the wild Indian, and every wild beast that ranges between the Mississippi and the Rockies free to face, and were afraid of nothing human; but with all our readiness to meet any one in personal encounter, we were not long in acknowledging our inferiority to Jack Winthrop."

"Tall and rather slim, he could not have weighed over a hundred and sixty, but in his long arms and sinewy frame lurked the strength of the grizzly bear. Then, too, he was as quick of motion as the panther, and, seemingly, as tenacious of life."

"But enough of this, Jack: I will to my story. Success crowned the mighty efforts of the invading army, and the Greasers were slowly but surely driven from one stronghold to another. At length we held a considerable number of them, besieged in a certain city, which, for reasons of my own, shall be here nameless."

"We outnumbered them three to one, but they had the advantage of us in having strong walls to defend them; so we were obliged to settle down to a long siege. Many of our largest guns were in the rear, and we had to wait for them to come up; and even when they had arrived, it was no small task to batter down their town."

"Thus, with occasional skirmishes, time passed on, and the Mexicans still held out with dogged resolution. We all fretted at this inactivity, and Jack Winthrop in particular, who was fiery and impatient, worked himself up into a towering passion."

"We who knew him best were not at all surprised when it was noised through the army that he had sent a defiance and challenge to the besieged. It was sent in his own handwriting, with remarkable spelling, and was to this effect: 'Announcing his contempt for the whole Mexican nation, he declared that he would whip any three men in the city. He then dared any three of them to meet him in an old deserted

house near the outside of the city, and fight him to the death."

"When this was generally known, there was a universal curiosity to know whether the challenge would be accepted; that there were three men in the city brave enough to fight a single person, even though that person be a man as famous as Jack Winthrop, we did not doubt, but the question was whether they would engage in so irregular an action or not."

"I hope the white-livered dogs won't," said old Bill Wicklow, "fur you'll get whipped, shore, Jack!"

"By the soul of Daniel Boone!" swore Jack Winthrop, "I hope they will! The Greaser ain't borned yit tek kin make Jack Winthrop pass in his checks!"

"Don't be too shore, boyee. Ef them chaps send out a passel of fellers to meet ye, they won't be no coyotes, they won't, but reg'lar snipers!"

"Shorters or coyotes, it don't matter to Jack Winthrop," cried the brave fellow. "Here's as kin whip any three, or five, or ten Greasers in all Mexico. Whoop! the bullets ain't run, nor the steel tempered t'et's to end old Jack. You'll see them three fellers chawed up in a shake!"

"And with this oft-repeated boast Jack Winthrop awaited the answer to his challenge. It soon came. The three Mexicans were to meet the one Texan in the deserted building, and fight him to the death."

"The building stood all alone between the hostile forces, now somewhat battered by shot and shell, and in such a position that no one could approach it on either side without being seen on the other; therefore it was agreed that Jack should be accompanied to the building by ten of his companions, while an equal number of Greasers should accompany their champions."

"The day on which the trial was to take place dawned fair and clear

